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# THE CHARACTERISTICS AND THE RELIGION OF MODERN SOCIALISM

# The Characteristics and the Religion of Modern Socialism

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By

Rev. JOHN J. MING, S.J.

Author of "Data of Modern Ethics Examined"

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✠ JOHN M. FARLEY,
*Archbishop of New York.*

New York, December 3, 1907.

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# PREFACE

SINCE socialism has of late engrossed public attention, many questions have arisen concerning its real nature and tendency. There is no doubt that obviously it presents itself at once as an economic system advocating socialization of ownership and production, and as a social movement having for its avowed object the emancipation of the working classes from oppression by modern capitalism.

But it is often asked, and not without reason, whether as an economic system it is not resting on a materialistic conception of society and of the world at large as its philosophical basis, and whether as a social movement it aims at freedom from capitalistic domination only and not also from the laws imposed by moral and religious convictions.

Yet, though such questions have frequently been asked, they have thus far not been thoroughly discussed. It is generally understood that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels are the intellectual authors of modern socialism, but the works in which, as in original sources, they laid down the fundamental principles of socialist thought are but little known and still less critically examined. We are likewise acquainted with utterances of many socialist writers and speakers concerning morals and

religion, but it is often doubted whether they express merely personal views, or represent integral parts and necessary consequences of a prevailing socialist theory.

The following treatises are written with the purpose of advancing inquiry in the line pointed out, and thus reaching certain and reliable conclusions concerning the moral and religious attitude of contemporary socialists.

From the explanation given it will be understood that the economic side of socialism, such as the nature of capitalist production, surplus-value, wage-system, and class-struggle, does not enter the subject-matter treated in the present work.

In conclusion, the author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Rev. John MacHale of Cleveland, Ohio, for very valuable assistance given him in writing this volume.

THE AUTHOR.

CLEVELAND, O., February 15, 1908.

N. B.—Socialist authors, programs, and platforms are quoted in this book without changing their spelling or capitalization.

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# INTRÓDUCTION

First among the evils which perplex modern society ranks its separation into two hostile classes: the one, though small in number, possessing the wealth of the earth, the other, a countless multitude, reduced more or less to the bare means of subsistence; the one often reveling in luxury and growing in power, the other doomed to hardships and dependence. As social reformers are usually awakened by social calamities, so in our present distress the socialists have risen to redeem the masses from their misery and society from its baneful division. They feel quite equal to the task they have set themselves, for they are, as they say, in possession of an economic system calculated to wipe out the very distinction between rich and poor by bringing about a just distribution of earthly goods among all members of the human family.

Nevertheless, the remedy they offer is distrusted. It is objected on many sides that socialism is atheistic and materialistic in its teachings and hence of such a nature, that, even were it suited to insure the temporal welfare of all, it still would deprive them of their highest moral and intellectual good. The American socialists, fully aware of the gravity of this imputation, have repeatedly uttered their protest against it. They grant that the extreme

views as set forth by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, and August Bebel, and as held by the far greater majority of German social democrats, border on materialism and are hostile to Christian religion and morality, but they deny that German socialist thought, as far as it is anti-religious, has been espoused in America. Nor does their remonstrance lack reasons which seem to support it. Professor R. T. Ely* says that the materialistic philosophy of Karl Marx, because essentially un-English as well as un-American, could not fail to prove a great obstacle to the growth of socialism among English-speaking nations. In fact, the German socialists, who after the year 1848 immigrated to the United States, started a good many labor movements in the Eastern cities, but failed to recruit their ranks from the native population.

It is further alleged that socialism in its official programs and platforms has adopted no paragraph whatever that could be interpreted as irreligious. It nowhere forbids religion, but only demands that it be considered as a private matter; it nowhere persecutes the Church, but merely wants it to be separated from the State. Is not this a merely political arrangement, which we find introduced in nearly all civilized countries and which prominent churchmen themselves, under the present circumstances, have gladly accepted?

Why, indeed, so we are often asked, should

*Socialism and Social Reform. New York 1894. p. 102.

opposition to religion be inherent in socialism? Socialism is an economic system. But economics and religion are two different spheres, which by their nature do not interfere with one another, and, as understood by socialists, are in perfect harmony. For to insure equally the temporal welfare of all is evidently in keeping with justice and charity, and therefore conformable to the benign intentions of the founder of Christianity and the framer of the moral law.

To convince us that such is the correct conception of socialism, no less an authority is appealed to than that of the Rt. Rev. J. L. Spalding, Bishop of Peoria. In a criticism of his book, "Socialism and Labor," A. M. Simons (editor of the "International Socialist Review," July, 1900—January, 1908) says:

"We must also recognize the fact that he has done the socialist propaganda something of a service in giving the authority of his position as a church dignitary to the statement that socialism and religion have nothing in common."

In confirmation he quotes the following words of the learned prelate:

"A socialist may be a theist or an atheist, a spiritualist or a materialist. . . . A large number of socialists, it is true, are atheists and materialists, but the earnest desire to discern some means whereby they may be relieved from their poverty and misery and the resulting vice and crime, is in intimate

harmony with the gentle and loving spirit of Him who passed no sorrow by."*

To arrive at the truth, it becomes necessary to inquire into the foundation and the commonly adopted teachings of American socialism. If, by a careful investigation, the charge of a materialistic tendency can not be substantiated, then repeating it would be unfair and unjust. But if, on the contrary, it is proved to evidence, the full truth must be laid open before the public, to warn it against a danger threatening the safety of society as well as the faith of the Christian Church, a danger all the more to be dreaded as it lurks hidden under specious protestations.

An examination of socialist teaching concerning God and religion, thorough and critical, but unprejudiced and for the sole purpose of establishing the truth, is the object of the following chapters.

There are two questions involved in our problem which need a solution:

1. What is understood by modern socialism as distinct from previous phases of the socialist movement?

2. What is the attitude of modern socialism toward religion? Does it admit the existence of a personal deity, or is it atheistic and materialistic? If materialistic, is it opposed or indifferent to religion in general and to Christianity in particular?

To solve these questions, the present work will

*Int. Soc. Review. Jan. 1903. p. 397.

comprise two parts, of which the first treats of the characteristics of modern socialism, the second of its religion.

# PART I

## The Characteristics of Modern Socialism

## CHAPTER I

### IDEA OF SOCIALISM

### Section I

*Socialism in General*

Socialism, from the time it was broached by Count Saint Simon, Charles Fourier, and Louis Blanc in France, by Robert Owen in England, and Charles Rodbertus in Germany, down to our day, when it has reached its full maturity under contemporary leaders and agitators, has passed through many stages of development. For this reason we may view it under a twofold aspect. We may consider those features which are common to all its succeeding phases and to all its different forms and, therefore, may be termed its essentials, or we may direct our attention to those peculiar traits which are proper to its present stage of evolution. By the first consideration we gain an understanding of socialism in general, by the second, an understanding of modern socialism.

What is socialism, considered in its general and

essential features? It is defined as an economic system embodying the abolition of private property in the means of production, and the substitution therefor of collective ownership with consequent collective control of production and distribution of the goods produced. Not different in meaning is the definition given by A. M. Simons. According to him, socialism is "a co-operative social organization where the means for the production and the distribution of wealth are the collective property of the working class, while the goods which are to be consumed become the private property of the individual workers." Or, as he says in another paragraph of the same article, "it is a collective democratically-managed organization of industry in which the natural resources and mechanical means for the production and distribution of wealth have their ownership vested in society and where production is for the direct use of the producers and not for sale."*

Thus conceived, socialism has four essential traits: first, the abolition of private property in the means of production; second, the transfer of the ownership in productive goods from the individual to society; third, the social or collective control of production with the implication that all members of the community are obliged to contribute toward production by their labor; fourth, the social or collective distribution of the produce, because, the

*Int. Soc. Rev. June 1904. pp. 721, 724.

ownership of the productive means and the control of production being socialized, society is also the owner of the goods produced, and hence has the right and the duty to distribute them among its members who have produced them by their united labor.

Fundamental to all other features is the abolition of private property in the means of production. For, according to the socialist view, private property under free competition has become the source of all our present evils, the cause of the unhappy split of society in two hostile classes, of the oppression of the poor by the rich, the employed by the employer. Hence, the substitution of collective for private ownership in productive goods, and of social for private production, is thought to be absolutely necessary to restore peace and happiness to the human race.

The Erfurt program of the German socialists says in this regard:

"Private ownership in the means of production, formerly the means of securing his product to the producer, has now become the means of expropriating the peasant proprietors, the artisans, and the small tradesmen, and of placing the non-producers, the capitalists, and large landowners in possession of the products of labor. Nothing but the conversion of the capitalist private ownership of the means of production into social ownership, and the substitution of social produc-

tion, carried on by and for society, in place of the present production of commodities for exchange, can effect such a revolution that, instead of large industries and the steadily growing capacities of common production being, as hitherto, a source of misery and oppression to the classes whom they have despoiled, they may become a source of the highest well-being and the most perfect and comprehensive harmony."

## Section II

### *Definition of Modern Socialism*

Modern or contemporary socialism has the four essential traits just described, but specifically determined and in an advanced stage of development. It is defined as a system both economic and political, which advocates the collective ownership of all capital and material of labor as also the collective control of production and of distribution of the produce by the entire people constituted into a democratic commonwealth. This definition fully agrees with the one virtually given by the Social Democratic Federation of England when it marked out as its object, "the socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange to be controlled by a democratic state in the interest of an entire community and the complete emancipation of labor from the domination of capitalism and

landlordism, with the establishment of social and economic equality between the sexes."*

The English socialist, Belfort Bax, understands by collectivist socialism:

"The assumption by the people, in other words, the concentration in the hands of a democratic state, of land, raw material, instruments of production, funded capital, etc., in such wise that each citizen shall obtain the full advantage of the improved processes of production, inasmuch as each citizen shall have to contribute his share to the necessary work of society."†

The National Platform of the Socialist Party of America adopted in Chicago in 1904 contains the following definition:

"Socialism means that all those things upon which the people in common depend shall by the people in common be owned and administered. It means that the tools of employment shall belong to their creators and users; that all production shall be for the direct use of the producers; that the making of goods for profit shall come to an end; that we shall be workers together; and that all opportunities shall be open and equal to all."

Analyzing these definitions, we find that modern socialism has two features by which the general idea of socialism is specifically determined: First, the socialization of *all* means of production and

*Socialism and Social Reform. p. 25.

†Religion of Socialism. London 1901. p. 78.

not of a part of them only, and consequently also the socialized control of the *entire* production; second, the collective ownership and control of production and distribution, not by smaller communities, but by the *entire people united in a democratic commonwealth.*

All the latest platforms of socialist parties assert these two characteristics more or less explicitly. All demand the abolition of the present system of private property and the socialization of ownership in the productive means without limitation and restriction. The Erfurt program is quite explicit. It specializes as goods which must be socialized the earth, its fruits, mines, quarries, raw material, tools, machines, and the means of exchange. It would indeed be difficult to conceive of any productive good not contained under those headings.

The platform of the Socialist Labor Party says expressly that a summary end must be put to the present barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes and the restoration of the land and all the means of production, transportation, and distribution to the people as a collective body.

According to the national platform adopted in Chicago in 1904, *all* things on which people depend in common, that is, all natural resources, must be owned and administered by the people in common, and all tools of employment must belong to the workers and producers, not individually, as is understood from the context, but collectively.

The manifesto of the Joint Committee of Socialist Bodies in England specifies the goods to be possessed in common as follows: "Our aim, one and all, is to obtain for the whole community complete ownership and control of the means of transport, the means of manufacture, the mines, and the land."*

From these quotations it is also evident that, according to the socialist platforms, the commonwealth, the entire people or nation, not the towns or municipalities or particular colonies, is the subject in which the collective ownership must be vested. When, moreover, the socialists in their programs demand the solidarity, the civil and political equality of all, direct government by the people and for the people, they undoubtedly have in view a democratic constitution of the commonwealth which is to be the sole and universal owner and producer.

The reason why modern socialism has taken up these two features, the social ownership of *all* means of production and the vesting of it in a *democratic commonwealth,* is laid down in the following consideration: Competition, oppression, and exploitation can not be entirely avoided where private goes on with social production. But this will necessarily be the case, if not all, but only a part, of the productive means is socialized. In like manner, anarchy of production, which is a necessary consequence of free competition, will not cease

*R. T. Ely. Socialism and Social Reform. (Appendix.) p. 372.

as long as there are many producers, no matter whether they be individual or corporate. Consequently, where order and justice in production are to prevail, there can be but one owner of productive means, one controller and organizer of production.

For the same reason a democratic constitution is deemed necessary for the socialistic commonwealth. A monarchical or aristocratic form of civil government, it is said, would necessarily entail the possession of wealth by the few, exploitation and oppression of the many.

Liebknecht has reasoned out this conclusion as follows:

"To make the interests of the ruled subservient to the interests of the rulers is the foundation and purpose of rule,—is the meaning of ruling. So long as there are rulers and ruled it must be so, for rule is, by its very nature, exploitation. It follows therefrom that the interests of the subject people demand the transformation of the state from its foundation according to their interest. It must cease to be the possession of a few persons of position and class and must become the possession of the citizens with full and equal rights, of whom no one rules over the other, and none will be ruled by another. For this the social democracy strives. In place of the present class rule, we will institute a free government of the people."*

*Socialism. What It Is and What It Seeks to Accomplish. Translated by May Wood Simons. Chicago. p. 8.

Socialism as a national socialization of the productive means of production and distribution, or as a co-operative democratic commonwealth, does not exist at present. It is as yet an idea, a hope, a paradise to come for the suffering human race, a land of plenty and prolific happiness, not yet possessed, but still to be conquered; a future society still to be founded by the overthrow of all our actual social relations. Even the idea of it is as yet vague and indefinite.* The socialists themselves own that we know the coming commonwealth only in general outlines. Belfort Bax confesses:

"Though we have no doubt of the transformation of modern civilization into socialism, yet we can not foretell definitely what form the social life of the future will take, any more than a man living at the beginning of the commercial period, say Thomas More, or Lord Bacon, could foresee the state of society at the end of the nineteenth century. . . . The present society will be gone with all its paraphernalia of checks and safeguards; that we know for certain. No less surely we know what the foundations of the new society will be. What will the new society build on that foundation of freedom and co-operation? That is the problem on which we can do no more than speculate."†

*See Philosophical Essays by Joseph Dietzgen. Translated from the German by M. Beer and Th. Rothstein. Chicago 1906. p. 190.

†Socialism. Its Growth and Outcome. By William Morris and Belfort Bax. London 1893. p. 288.

What, then, is socialism at present over and above a theory or an economic system? An organization of the working class and those in sympathy with it, with the object of bringing about socialization of production, an organization, however, not yet complete but still in the process of formation.

As such we find it described in the Indianapolis platform of 1901. Its very first lines read:

"The Socialist Party of America, in national convention assembled, declares its aim to be the organization of the working class and those in sympathy with it into a political party, with the object of conquering the powers of government and using them for the purpose of transforming the present system of private ownership of the means of production into collective ownership by the entire people."

Socialism at present is an immense army of workers, of proletarians, recruiting and organizing itself everywhere, fighting against the yet unconquered power of capitalism in order to emancipate labor, marching on toward and struggling for the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth, in which production is to be controlled collectively and, as is hoped, in the interest of the producers and for the benefit of all. Though yet new, this army is already found in all civilized countries; though not yet complete, it is confident of invincible strength and conscious of having achieved marvelous results.

"Everywhere," says E. Vandervelde, the leader of the Belgian socialists, "from Russia to New Zealand, the proletariat has organized, publicly and secretly; everywhere, under different forms, but with the same final end, the Social Democracy is arranging itself against the old-time powers; it is wresting from them political rights, it is imposing on them social reforms, it is constraining popes and emperors to make it concessions in the vain hope of arresting its progress. In all the domains of thought and of action, in the works of artists, as in the writings of poets, in the books of scientists, as in the text of laws, in the millions of newspapers, pamphlets, publications, which the democratized press spreads daily through all houses and families, the socialist idea is penetrating, filtering into brains, crystallizing into purposes, conquering minds and hearts with sovereign power. We see it forbidden in all parliaments, preached in all cities of workingmen, its feasts kept with religious zeal with each recurring year by all nations of workers."*

Belfort Bax, comparing the co-operative commonwealth after the complete socialization of ownership, production, and distribution with the army of workers now being organized and marshaled into battle array, calls the former triumphant, the latter militant socialism. The movement of the united working men is indeed quite ap-

*Int. Soc. Rev. Feb. 1901. p. 484.

propriately conceived of as an embittered warfare carried on not only against capitalism but against all existing social institutions, for the purpose of establishing a new order of things, in which emancipated labor will be for all equally a source of comfort and happiness.*

*Socialism is in the United States represented by two organizations, the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party. The Socialist Labor Party was formed by a coalition of several labor groups in 1877 and was for many years the most powerful socialist union in this country. In 1899 it reached the zenith of its power, having cast in the elections of the preceding year 82,204 votes. But just then it split into two factions owing to a clash of opinions on the attitude to be held toward trade-unionism. The Rochester faction seceded in 1900. Since that time the power of the Socialist Labor Party has been waning. In the elections of 1904 it cast no more than 33,536 votes. The Socialist Party is of quite recent origin. In 1897 Eugene V. Debs formed of several pre-existing organizations the Social Democracy, which, when reconstructed the following year, was called the Social Democratic Party. In the Indianapolis convention in 1901 it was joined by the Rochester faction of the Socialist Labor Party. It was then also that it took its present name and issued a new platform. Having spread over thirty-three States and Territories, it cast in 1904 no less than 408,230 votes, but in 1906 no more than 285,296. The total socialist vote of the world in 1903 is given as high as 6,285,374, while the entire number of contemporary socialists, voters and non-voters, is said to amount to thirty millions.

See International Socialist Review. Sept. 1904. p. 153. Also M. H. Hillquit, History of Socialism in America. p. ii. ch. 4. The Worker. New York, Jan. 12, 1907.

# CHAPTER II

## MODERN SOCIALISM AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

### SECTION I

### *Modern Socialism a Revolutionary Movement*

MODERN socialism starts among the organized working men a movement the goal of which is the overthrow of the present social order and the establishment of entirely new economic and social relations. To all appearances a movement of that kind aims at a revolution, wider, more universal, more thoroughgoing than perhaps ever has occurred in the course of human history.

Nevertheless, it might seem an unfair exaggeration to call modern socialism revolutionary, when speaking of it as a whole and not merely of a division of it. For is it not just at this moment split into two factions, of which the one advocates revolution, the other reform, as a necessary means to reach its goal? The one calls its ranks to irreconcilable war, whilst the other inculcates moderation. Let us first of all ask what is meant by revolution and by reform and in what they differ. Karl Kautsky will give us very valuable information on this particular point. He writes:

"Measures which have for their object to adapt the political and juridical superstructure of society to the new economic conditions are *reforms,* if they proceed from the class which has hitherto ruled society politically and economically; they are reforms even if they are not freely accorded, but are obtained through the pressure of the governed classes, or by the force of circumstances. On the other hand, measures of that kind constitute the outcome of a *revolution,* if they proceed from a class which has hitherto been economically and politically oppressed, and which has now conquered the political powers, in order, as it in its own interests necessarily must, to transform, more or less rapidly, the entire juridical and political superstructure of society and so to create new forms of social activity." . . . "It is, therefore, the conquest of the powers of the State by a hitherto oppressed class; in other words, the *political revolution,*—which is an essential characteristic of the *social revolution* in its narrower sense, as opposed to *social reform.* Those who repudiate political revolution as a means of the social transformation on grounds of principle, or who wish to confine the latter to such measures as can be obtained from the ruling classes, are *social reformers,* no matter how opposed their social ideal may be to the existing form of society. On the other hand, every one is a *revolutionary* whose aim is that a hitherto oppressed class should conquer the power of the State. He does not cease

to be such if he wishes to prepare and hasten on this conquest by means of social reforms wrested from the ruling classes. Not the striving for social reforms but the explicit confining oneself to them, distinguishes the social reformer from the social revolutionary. On the other hand, only that *political revolution* becomes a *social revolution* which results from a hitherto *socially oppressed class* being forced to complete its political emancipation by its social, on account of its low position in society becoming incompatible with its political predominance. A split in the ranks of the ruling classes, be it even so great as to assume the most violent forms of a civil war, is not a social revolution."*

Revolution as thus described by K. Kautsky implies a struggle between the oppressed and the oppressors, between the ruled and the ruling class, which will result in the victory of the former and the conquest by them of the governmental powers henceforward to be used in behalf of their social and political emancipation. The oppressed class are at present the laborers, the oppressors are the capitalists. All other classes, it is said, will disappear in the face of modern industry by being reduced either to the proletariat, or the bourgeoisie, the propertied employers. Revolution, consequently, becomes a struggle between the laborers and the

*The Social Revolution. Translated into English from the German by J. N. Askew. London 1903. pp. 2, 3.

capitalists, a struggle to the knife, unrelenting and irreconcilable, ending only in the extinction of the now dominating class of the rich, and the complete triumph of the now enslaved class of the proletarians.

Reform, on the contrary, excludes a class-struggle. The reformists maintain that there is no antagonism between the possessing classes and the proletariat, or that, where it still exists, it is decreasing in intensity; and they, therefore, advocate instead of strife a policy of mediation and compromise. They have the same ultimate end in view as the revolutionists, the establishment of the co-operative commonwealth, but hope to achieve it in a peaceful way by gradually transforming the economic structure of society. As means to this end they propose measures of municipal reform, co-operatives, trade-unions, industrial and labor legislation, democratization of the State. They do not aim at the seizure of the supreme power, but submit to the capitalist government and co-operate with it, with the expectation, however, of obtaining concessions from it and of inducing it to enact laws which will bring about collective ownership and control of production and distribution.

It is true, the reformists, or, as they sometimes are called, the opportunists, are nowadays met with in all European countries. We find them in England, Germany, France, Italy, and Belgium as a conservative wing. Their existence is beyond

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doubt. We have, however, to take into consideration not only their existence, but also their relative strength and importance in the socialist body. In this regard two facts are most certain.

First, their appearance is of recent date. Modern socialism as originally conceived by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, and laid down in their classical writings, is most decidedly revolutionary. In their very first appeal to the masses of the laborers, in the communist manifesto, which contains the fundamental theory of socialism, they say in plain words: "The immediate aim of communists is the same as that of all proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat."

In his "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," Engels describes the last stage of social evolution as follows: "The proletariat seizes the public power and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie into public property." To which he adds the remark: "To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the theoretical mission of the modern proletariat."*

The reform, therefore, is a deviation from the essentials of modern socialism, and logically re-

*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. Translated by E. Aveling. Chicago 1903. p. 86.

quires a revision both of its tactics and its doctrines.*

Second, the reformists are the minority, gaining and losing in power with the change of circumstances, the revolutionists the vast majority, powerful and influential by their organization and untiring activity. That the Erfurt program, which was adopted by the entire body of the German socialists in 1891 and must be regarded as the creed of Social Democracy, is revolutionary is as plain as daylight. Having affirmed that socialism aims at the emancipation not only of the proletariat, but of the entire human race, it goes on to say that this emancipation can not be brought about but by a struggle of the working classes with the capitalists, and again that the working classes by their struggle can not effect the transfer of the ownership in the means of production to the community without being first invested with political rights and political power.

In the socialist convention at Dresden in 1903, both the revisionists, who had in the meantime

*Bernstein and his followers in fact attempted the revision of the theory and hence are called revisionists. E. Untermann makes the following distinction between revisionists and opportunists. "Broadly speaking, one might call revisionists those who frame the theory of this side-current of socialist thought (*reformism*), and opportunists those who seek to apply the theory in practical party work and in parliament." See The International Socialist Review. Nov. 1903. p. 280; Dec. 1903. p. 321.

grown in numbers, and the revolutionists, who remained in the full possession of power, were represented, the former by Edw. Bernstein and G. von Vollmar, the latter by A. Bebel and K. Kautsky as their leaders. Their discussions, passionate in the highest degree, were carried on with a din that resounded in the press of the whole world. But finally the resolution condemning revisionism was adopted by the immense majority of 288 to 11. It reads as follows:

"The convention rejects in the most decisive manner the revisionist efforts to change our hitherto tested and victory-crowned tactics, resting on the class struggle, by substituting for the conquest of political power through the overthrow of our opponents, a policy of conciliation with the existing order of things. The result of such revisionist tactics would be that a party that works for the most rapid possible transformation of the existing bourgeois society into the socialist society, and which in the best sense of the word is revolutionary, would be changed into a party which would occupy itself with the reformation of bourgeois society. Accordingly, the convention is opposed to the revisionist movement now existing in the party, and is of the conviction that the class antagonisms do not decrease but rather grow sharper and clearer, and the party refuses the responsibility for the political and economical conditions resting on the capitalist manner of produc-

tion, and accordingly it refuses all endorsement of means that tend to maintain the ruling class in power."*

The Dresden resolution very soon found acceptance beyond the boundaries of the German Empire. In the sixth International Socialist Congress assembled in Amsterdam in August, 1904, its adoption was moved by the Socialist Party of France and carried by a majority of 25 to 11, when after a debate of two days the votes were taken by countries. For the resolution voted Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Bulgaria, Spain, America, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, and Russia; against it the British colonies. The vote of the following countries was split: Great Britain, the Social Democratic Federation voting for the resolution, and the Independent Labor Party against; France, the Socialist Party of France (the Guesdists) being in favor of it, the Jaureists against it. Norway, the Argentine Republic, Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Sweden, and Switzerland abstained from voting.†

In 1905 the different socialist parties in France united on a revolutionary program.

In the face of these facts, we can not doubt any longer about the revolutionary character of the socialist movement, notwithstanding the existence of a reformist party. Revolutionism is plainly contained in the original and orthodox doctrine of

*Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1903. p. 284.

†The Worker. Aug. 28, Sept. 4, 11, 1904.

socialism, naturally follows from the fundamentals, is openly proposed by the vast majority of socialists assembled as a body in convention.

In America there is as yet no split into revolutionists and revisionists. The platforms, as well as the acknowledged leaders, all, without exception and without restriction, profess unmitigated and unqualified revolutionism. In this regard, socialism in this country has a singleness of purpose and a unity of doctrine which is wanting in European States and especially in Germany. Of the two American socialist bodies the older closes its platform with the following appeal:

"We call upon the wage-workers of the United States, and upon all other honest citizens, to organize under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party into a class-conscious body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them (capitalistic combinations) by taking possession of the public powers; so that held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying conditions of the present class struggle we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, the restoration of the land and of all means of production, transportation, and distribution to the people as a collective body."

The younger association begins the Indianapolis platform with the following words:

"The Socialist Party of America, in national convention assembled, declares its aim to be the organ-

ization of the working class and those in sympathy with it into a political party with the object of conquering the powers of government."

The present platform adopted by the Chicago convention is no less explicit. It contains the following paragraphs:

"The socialist movement owes its birth and growth to that economic development or world-process which is rapidly separating a working or producing class from a possessing or capitalist class."

"The fact that these two classes have not yet become fully conscious of their distinction from each other, the fact that the lines of division and interest may not yet be clearly drawn, does not change the fact of the class conflict. This class struggle is due to the private ownership of the means of employment, or the tools of production."

"Between these classes there can be no possible compromise or identity of interests, any more than there can be peace in the midst of war, or light in the midst of darkness. A society based upon this class division carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Such a society is founded in fundamental injustice. There can be no possible basis for social peace, for individual freedom, for mental and moral harmony, except in the conscious and complete triumph of the working class as the only class that has the right or power to be."

"Such measures of relief as we may be able to

force from capitalism are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole powers of government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of government, and thus come into their rightful inheritance."

With full truth could E. V. Debs, the socialist nominee for the Presidency of the United States, in his speech of acceptance, say: "There is not a line in that platform which is not revolutionary."

A. M. Simons, then editor of the "International Socialist Review," speaking of the work of the Chicago convention, positively denies that there was in it any movement to the "Right" or opportunism, and avers, that if there was any change from the customary revolutionary point of view, it was largely due to the presence in the convention of a small body of impossibilists (extremists) against whose actions the entire convention revolted. He emphatically declares it to be a fact, that "the Socialist Party of America stands in the most intelligently revolutionary and uncompromising position of any socialist party in the world."*

While, therefore, in other countries, the body of socialists as a whole is revolutionary, a relatively small minority of reformists notwithstanding, socialism in America is purely and entirely revolutionary, free from any conservative or compromising elements.

Accordingly, if socialism is to triumph, we have

*Int. Soc. Rev. May 1904. p. 707; June. pp. 765, 766.

to expect a gigantic revolution which will shatter the whole society of to-day to its very foundations; a revolution which will not only overthrow all thrones and monarchical governments and convert all States into purely democratic governments, but also abolish all class distinctions and expropriate all owners of land and industrial or commercial establishments; a revolution which will be brought about in all countries of the civilized world by armies of workers waging a relentless war against capitalism. Its end is above all the emancipation of the proletariat. But, as Marx says in the communist manifesto, "the proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, can not stir, can not raise itself up without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air." We may sum up what we have said of the revolutionary character of socialism in the words of James T. Van Rensselaer, a prominent Californian socialist:

"At some length I have attempted to demonstrate that there is no Socialism that is not Revolutionary Socialism. This I have defined as a Revolutionary ideal, to be obtained by a Revolutionary Class, preaching a Revolutionary Propaganda through the agency of a Revolutionary Party, and by which the workers are to secure the general ownership of all the means of production and distribution for all the people."*

*Int. Soc. Rev. July 1903. p. 38.

## Section II

### *Modern Socialism a Political Movement*

Far reaching and universal, however, as this revolution is to be, the socialists avow that they will not bring it about by physical force, by violence and shedding of blood. This would be the method of anarchism, which must prove ineffectual at a time when the State has immense armies at its disposal. The method by which the socialists hope to achieve their end is to consist in the use of lawful measures.

"The irony of history," says Engels, "turns everything upside down. We the 'revolutionists,' the 'revolters,' prosper far better by lawful measures than by unlawful measures and violence. The law and other parties, as they call themselves, go to ruin under the legal conditions which they themselves have established. They cry out with Odilon Barrot, *la legalité nous tue,* 'lawfulness is killing us,' while we under this lawfulness are getting full muscles and rosy cheeks and are the picture of eternal life. And if we do not so completely lose our wits as to let ourselves be drawn into a street fight, just to please them, then there remains nothing else for them to do finally except to break down this lawfulness themselves, which has proved so disadvantageous to them."*

But what are these measures, lawful and yet

*Int. Soc. Rev. July 1902. p. 12.

effecting a universal revolution, peaceful and yet weapons to be used in a war to the death? We are told that they are of a political nature, and that, therefore, socialism is a political movement. They consist in the formation of a political party and the use of the ballot, which is to result in the election of socialist representatives in municipal councils, in State and national assemblies. Those so elected, as long as they are in the minority, will endeavor forcibly to obtain ameliorations in the condition of the working class and prepare measures for its full emancipation; but once in the majority they will transfer the supreme power to the people, respectively, to the proletariat. There is no room left to doubt that this is for the present the socialist view. The sixth paragraph of the Erfurt program reads:

"The struggle of labor against capitalistic oppression is necessarily a political one. The laboring class cannot carry on its industrial struggles and develop its economic organization without political rights. It cannot effect the transfer of the means of production into the possession of the social body without possessing itself of political power."

Were these words not clear in themselves, W. Liebknecht would throw light on them to render them as clear as daylight. Commenting on them he says:

"To expect the transformation of society and

the social revolution to accomplish itself without taking part in the political struggle is childish foolishness."*

The fifth International Socialist Congress assembled in Paris in 1900 passed the following resolution:

"Socialism, to which is given the task of transforming the proletariat into an army for the class struggle, has for its first duty to introduce into that class a consciousness of its interests and its strength and to use for that purpose all the means which the existing social and political situation puts into their hands or are suggested by the higher conceptions of justice. . . . Among these means the congress would indicate political action, universal suffrage, and organization of the laboring class into political groups, unions, cooperatives, benefit societies, circles for art and education, etc. It urges the militant socialists to propagate in all possible manner all means of augmenting the strength of the laboring class and rendering them capable of politically and economically expropriating the bourgeoisie and socializing the means of production."†

The Socialist Party of America, in the Indianapolis platform, declares its aim to be the organization of the working class and those in sympathy

*Socialism, What It Is and What It Seeks to Accomplish. p. 48.

†Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1900. pp. 260, 261.

with it into a political party. The reason why such organization is aimed at is explained in the following words:

"The workers can most effectively act as a class in their struggle against the collective power of capitalism by constituting themselves a political party distinct from and opposed to all parties formed by the propertied classes."

The Chicago convention went into further detail. In Part V of its platform it declares:

"To the end that the workers may seize every possible advantage that may strengthen them to gain complete control of the powers of government and thereby the sooner establish the co-operative commonwealth, the Socialist Party pledges itself to watch and work in both the economic and political struggle for each successive immediate interest of the working class. . . . We lay upon every man elected to any executive or legislative office the first duty of striving to procure whatever is for the workers' immediate interest, and for whatever will lessen the economic and political powers of the capitalist, and increase the like powers of the worker. But in so doing we are using the remedial measures as means to the one great end of the co-operative commonwealth. Such measures as we may be able to force from capitalism are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole power of the government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole

system of industry and thus come into their rightful inheritance."

The State program adopted by the Chicago convention in its preamble makes the following suggestion:

"The principles of the Socialist Platform can not be carried into effect while the Socialist Party is a minority party. The work of Socialist members of State legislatures and local administrations must bear in mind the fact that they are fighting on a parliamentary basis the class struggle. They must defend the interests of the working class against the encroachments of the capitalist class and decline in their parliamentary work any trading with capitalist representatives for favorable legislation."*

Strong and outspoken as these utterances, quoted from socialist programs, are in their abhorrence of violence, they are not absolute and unqualified, as the intelligent reader may have observed. They imply as a condition that free suffrage is granted to the people and political agitation is not rendered impossible by law or by the government. Where such liberty does not exist, the socialists, as recent experience shows, as for instance in Russia, justify the use of weapons and the shedding of blood as the only means leading to their end. Socialism, therefore, should be understood to have a political

*Int. Soc. Rev. May 1904. p. 679. On the revolutionary and political character of socialism see also Enrico Ferri, Socialism and Modern Science. pp. 138-156.

character only under ordinary circumstances, in States where, by a liberal constitution, the ballot has been introduced and freedom of speech, of the press, and of association is granted.

## Section III

### *Modern Socialism an International Movement*

Organization is one of the most remarkable features of militant socialism and, no doubt, a most efficacious means to obtain its revolutionary end. The united and well-organized working men of even one country are a power irresistible for any government.* But for the universal revolution

*Ernest D. Hull, Socialist Party candidate for Governor of Connecticut in 1906, has given the following description of the national and international organization of socialism.

"In the matter of organization it should be remembered that the Socialist Party is a world organization. Twenty-four countries are represented in the International Socialist Bureau, located at Brussels, Belgium, where a permanent secretary is maintained. Each of these countries have their independent organizations affiliated with the International. An International Congress meets every three years. The last one, held at Amsterdam, Holland, 1904, was attended by 454 delegates, representing twenty-four countries, nine being present from the United States. In this country we are organized in every State and territory. National headquarters is located at 269 Dearborn Street, Chicago, in charge of a salaried national Secretary, with a corps of assistants working twelve months every year. Each State has also a secretary and other officers, some of them salaried and devoting all of their time to the work." The Worker. Oct. 6, 1906.

which the socialists have in view, the organization of the laborers of one particular country is not deemed sufficient. To gain the final victory, to crush all power of capitalism, to emancipate the whole human race, the union of the entire proletariat all over the earth into one federated army is desired. Hence the socialist war cry: "Proletarians, workers of the world, unite!" This means, in other words, that the socialist movement is *international*. The Erfurt program thus argues for the necessity of internationalism.

"The interests of the working classes are identical in all lands governed by the capitalist methods of production. The extension of the world's commerce and production for the world's markets made the position of the workingman in one country daily more dependent upon that of the workingman in other countries. Therefore the emancipation of labor is a task in which the workmen of all civilized lands have a share. Recognizing this, the Social Democrats of Germany feel and declare themselves at one with the workmen of every land who are conscious of the destinies of their class."

The manifesto of the Joint Committee of Socialist Bodies in England fully agrees with the Erfurt program, as is shown by the following paragraph:

"Even those readjustments of industry and administration which are socialist in form will not be permanently useful, unless the whole State is merged into an organized commonwealth. Munici-

palization, for instance, can only be accepted as socialism on condition of its forming a part of national and at last of international socialism, in which the workers of all nations, while adopting within the borders of their own country those methods which are rendered necessary by their historic development, can federate upon a common basis of the collective ownership of the great means and instruments of the creation and distribution of wealth, and thus break down national animosities by the solidarity of human interest throughout the civilized world."*

The second part of the Chicago platform is equally pronounced in asserting the necessity of internationalism:

"As an American Socialist Party, we pledge our fidelity to the principles of international socialism, as embodied in the united thought and action of the socialists of all nations. In the industrial development already accomplished the interests of the world's workers are separated by no boundaries.

"The condition of the most exploited and oppressed workers, in the most remote places of the earth, inevitably tends to drag down all the workers of the world to the same level. The tendency of the competitive wage system is to make labor's lowest condition the measure or rule of its universal condition. Industry and finance are no

*R. T. Ely, Socialism and Social Reform. p. 371.

longer national but international, in both organization and results. The chief significance of national boundaries, and of the so-called patriotisms which the ruling class of each nation is seeking to revive, is the power which these give to capitalism to keep the workers of the world from uniting, and to throw them against each other in the struggle of contending capitalist interests for the control of the yet unexploited markets of the world or the remaining sources of profit."

"The socialist movement, therefore, is a world movement. It knows of no conflicts of interest between the workers of one nation and the workers of another. It stands for the freedom of the workers of all nations; and in so standing, it makes for the full freedom of all humanity."

Internationalism is a necessary attribute of socialism. It follows as a necessary consequence, first, from the universality of the end, which the socialists pretend to pursue, the emancipation of the entire human race. For if such is the object they have in view, they must, as W. Liebknecht says, "see in the members of the divided nationalities only men and brothers." It follows, secondly, from the impossibility to reach this end by the establishing of the democratic commonwealth without the co-operation of the working classes of all countries. For since owing to the great modern inventions there exists economic, political, and literary intercourse among all parts of the earth,

one land affects the other, and the evolution of one nation is dependent on that of all others.

Internationalism viewed under the aspect of a world-wide organization has also become a fact. The socialists of the several countries have commenced to meet and concert co-operation for their common end. They have held for some years an international congress, which is convened at appointed times, to discuss their common interests, tactics, and principles. In the one held at Amsterdam 474 delegates representing 24 countries were seated.* The last Congress at Stuttgart, 1907, was attended by about 900 delegates. They have moreover established an International Bureau at Brussels with the purpose that through it "the socialist movements of the various nations of the world might communicate with each other and cooperate with each other in mutually understood programs, and so far as practicable, in united action."

No doubt, in the programs and declarations thus far quoted, socialism presents itself as a vast and powerful organization. The methods which it employs and the means of which it makes use are as radical as the object it has in view is wide. For it purposes nothing less than the transformation of human society. To effect this, it rouses the entire working population to a fight with the propertied classes, to wrest from them both their political

*Int. Soc. Review. October 1904. p. 218.

power and their rights of property, and forms the proletariat of the whole world into a well-arrayed army to wage a universal war, which though not necessarily bloody, still is embittered and unrelenting; though difficult and arduous, is not to come to an end until all present social institutions shall be overthrown, and on the ruins of the old a new society shall rise. Whether in reality, the unity and stability of this widespread organization is as perfect, its object as disinterested and humane, its method as lawful and wise, its final victory as certain as they are described by socialists in their programs, speeches, and writings, facts must show.

# CHAPTER III

## SOCIALISM AS A SCIENTIFIC SYSTEM

### SECTION I

*Marx, the Founder of Scientific Socialism*

THE socialist movement, to be successful, needs not only a soul that gives life and impulse, but also clear ideas which shed light on the goal to be reached, the road to be followed, and the method of harmonious action to be observed. Life and impulse were inherent in this movement from its very beginning, both when it was first outlined in France and England by the social theories of Saint Simon, Fourier, and Robert Owen, and when it was carried into effect in America, as well as Europe, by the founding of communities and colonies on the basis of collective ownership. But however vigorous and enthusiastic, the movement lacked the intellectual element. Later social reformers became conscious of this deficiency. They pointed out that its originators started from mystical and fantastical theories; that since the social evils were ignored by them, the object in view was but vaguely conceived, and the remedies advised were impractical and ineffective. This primitive socialist movement, therefore, is termed Utopian in economics and

sociology, and recorded as a signal failure in history. Frederick Engels says of it:

"To the crude conditions of capitalistic production and the crude class condition corresponded crude theories. The solution of the social problem, which as yet lay hidden in undeveloped economic conditions, the Utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain. Society presented nothing but wrongs; to remove these was the task of reason. It was necessary then to discover a new and more perfect system of social order and to impose this upon society from without by propaganda, and, wherever it was possible, by the example of model experiments. These new social systems were foredoomed as Utopian; the more completely they were worked out in detail, the more they could not avoid drifting into pure phantasies."*

The modern socialist movement claims to have outgrown this primitive imperfection. It proceeds, we are told, no longer in the twilight of vague and fantastical views, but in the full glare of a perfect science, developed from modern thought and researches. Being reconstructed on an intellectual basis, it has not only turned practical in the best sense of the word, but also scientific.

Karl Marx (born at Treves in 1818, died in London 1883) is regarded as the master mind that

*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. pp. 11, 12. See also Int. Soc. Rev. Feb. 1905. p. 464. Socialism and the Social Movement, by Prof. W. Sombart, translated by P. Atterbury. Chicago 1902. pp. 18-36.

advanced socialism beyond its Utopian stage of development and, by basing practice on theory, raised it to the rank of a philosophical science.

"He was," says Enrico Ferri, "the only one who, rising above the sentimental socialism of former days, has arranged in a systematic and orderly fashion the facts of social economy, and by induction drawn from them political conclusions in support of the revolutionary method of tactics as a means of approach to a revolutionary goal."*

The theory of socialism devised by Karl Marx has not remained confined to Germany, where he was the intellectual founder of social democracy, but has spread all over Europe and, crossing the seas, reached America and Australia. Throughout the whole world, it has been accepted as the standard of socialist thought. Frederick Engels, in the preface which he has written for the English translation of "Capital," Marx's principal work, says: " 'Das Kapital' is often called on the Continent 'the Bible of the working class.' That the conclusions arrived at in this work are daily more becoming the fundamental principles of the great working-class movement, not only in Germany and Switzerland, but in France, in Holland and Belgium, in America and even in Italy and Spain, that everywhere the working class more and more recognizes in these conclusions the most ade-

*Socialism and Modern Science. Translated by R. Rives La Monte. New York 1904. p. 174.

quate expression of its condition and its aspirations, nobody acquainted with that movement will deny."*

Of the communist manifesto, which was written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels conjointly, the latter in the preface to the English edition of 1888 says: "At present it is undoubtedly the most widespread, the most international production of socialist literature, the common platform acknowledged by millions of working men from Siberia to California."

## Section II

### *The Marxian Theory in America*

As Professor Ely has asserted, and others have repeated the assertion, that the Marxian theory is un-American, it is proper here to inquire in particular to what extent it is accepted by the socialists of the United States as their standard of scientific thought. The following quotations will be helpful in establishing the truth:

"The People," the organ of the Socialist Labor Party, in its issue of January 12, 1900, says:

"Among the men whom the conditions of the nineteenth century raised up as mouthpieces of the proletarian revolution, two stand pre-eminent—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. . . . They were so intimately connected in their activities that

*The Capital. Editor's preface. p. xiii.

the work of the one can hardly be considered separately from that of the other. They sharpened the sword for us and taught us how to use it. Their writings laid the scientific foundation upon which socialism is built. From their work proceeded the clear knowledge which divided the modern social democracy from the dreams of the Utopians."*

Morris Hillquit, formerly a member of the Socialist Labor Party, now of the Socialist Party, in his "History of Socialism in the United States" writes:

"The (Communist) Manifesto contains the first complete exposition of Marxian Scientific Socialism, and contemporary socialism may be said to date from the time of the publication of the document in February, 1848."† In other places he calls Marx the father of modern or scientific socialism.

A. M. Simons says in his article on "Socialism and the Socialist Movement":

"It is with the work of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels that modern Socialism began to definitely take on the forms by which it is known to-day."‡

In his pamphlet "The Philosophy of Socialism," the same author affirms:

"Socialism is the philosophy of social development

*Quoted by David Goldstein. Socialism. Boston 1903. p. 186.
†History of Socialism in the United States. p. 160.
‡Int. Soc. Rev. June 1904. p. 725.

that treats of the great economic laws according to the working of which each of these stages of society must naturally be a development from its predecessor. The basis of socialism in this sense is found in what is sometimes called 'materialistic conception of history' or Economic Determinism. The foundation of this conception was stated (as follows) in the preface to the famous Communist Manifesto issued by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels."*

In the said preface, however (edited in 1888), Engels confesses that the materialistic conception of history, of which he gives an exact formula and which he calls the nucleus and fundamental proposition of the manifesto, belongs to Marx.

L. Boudin, in a defense of Marx against his latter-day critics, writes:

"Marxism is so much *the* scientific doctrine in its sphere (which covers all the life of humanity in organized society, including all its social and intellectual manifestations) that you can not destroy it without at the same time destroying all scientific knowledge of the subject."†

The American socialists, furthermore, have not only declared Marx to be the founder and father of scientific socialism, but also espouse and profess his teachings. Evidence of this is the kind of literature which they circulate among the members

*Philosophy of Socialism. Chicago. p. 4.

†Int. Soc. Rev. May 1905. p. 643.

of their body, and among the working classes which they are to win for their ranks; and still more the learned works which they mark out as the genuine source from which the knowledge of *scientific socialism* must be drawn. Among the classical authors and original exponents of socialist philosophy, Karl Marx is always said to hold the first rank; and of his works, "Capital," "Contribution to the Critique Political Economy," "Revolution and Contra-revolution," "Wage-Labor and Capital" are first and chiefly recommended. With the communist manifesto, we are already acquainted.

After Marx comes Frederick Engels (born at Bremen 1824, died in London 1895). His principal works are considered to be: "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," "The Origin of the Family, of Private Property, and the State," "Feuerbach, the Roots of Socialist Philosophy." Engels, however, sets forth in his works not so much his own as Marx's theory, having written them with him, under his influence, and, in part, from material prepared by him. His personal merit is thought to consist chiefly in having systematized the Marxian thought.* Of "Socialism,

*Concerning the share which he had in the building up of the socialist theory, Engels himself makes the following statement: "I can not deny that I had before and during my forty years' collaboration with Marx a certain independent share not only in laying out the foundations, but more particularly in working out the theory. But the greatest part of the leading

Utopian and Scientific," A. M. Simons says that it shares with "Capital" the right to be considered the great text-book of socialism.

"It is, next Marx's 'Capital,' the most important book of modern scientific socialism. The individual who has not read his 'Socialism, Utopian and Scientific,' can hardly call himself a socialist. The fundamental propositions of the socialist philosophy are clearly laid down in this wonderful little volume, and they form the basis on which all socialist books have been written."*

Next follow the writings of authors who were contemporaries, friends, and faithful companions of Marx and Engels, defenders and commentators of their theories. As such are regarded "Woman Under Socialism," by August Bebel; "Socialism, What It Is and What It Seeks to Accomplish," by W. Liebknecht; "Social Revolution" and "On the Morrow of the Social Revolution," and "Ethics and the Materialistic Conception of His-

essential thinking, particularly in the realm of economics and especially its final sharp statement, belongs to Marx alone. What I contributed, Marx could quite readily have carried out without me, with the exception of a pair of special applications. What Marx supplied, I could not have readily brought. Marx stood higher, saw further, took a wider, clearer, quicker survey than all of us. Marx was a genius, we others, at the best, talented. Without him the theory would not be what it is to-day, by a long way. It, therefore, rightly bears his name." Feuerbach, the Roots of Socialist Philosophy. Chicago 1903. p. 93.

*Socialism *vs.* Anarchism. Chicago 1901. p. 11.

tory," by Karl Kautsky; "The Positive Outcome of Philosophy" and "Philosophical Essays on Socialism," by Joseph Dietzgen. Almost all have been translated from the German into English by American authors.

Not from Germany alone, however, but from nearly all other European countries, socialist literature is imported, which with scarcely any exception is thoroughly Marxian in thought. From England come: "Student's Marx," by E. Aveling, a son-in-law of Marx; "Ethics of Socialism," "Religion of Socialism," "Outlooks from the New Standpoint," by Belfort Bax; "Growth and Outcome of Socialism," by William Morris and Belfort Bax; "Historical Basis of Socialism," "Britain for the British," "God and My Neighbor," by Robert Blatchford. From Belgium has been imported "Collectivism and Industrial Evolution," by E. Vandervelde; from France, "The Evolution of Property," "Social and Philosophical Studies," by Paul Lafargue, another son-in-law of Marx; "State and Socialism," "Revolution and Internationalism," "The People's Marx," by Gabriel Deville; from Italy, "Socialism and Modern Science," by Enrico Ferri; "The Economic Foundations of Society," by Achille Loria; "Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History," by Antonio Labriola.

Original scientific productions are yet rare in America, though we mention L. Gronlund's "New

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Economy" and "Co-operative Commonwealth"; A. M. Simons' "The American Farmer"; P. E. Burrowes' "Revolutionary Essays in Socialist Faith and Fancy"; Isador Ladoff's "Passing of Capitalism" and "American Pauperism"; E. Untermann's "Science and Religion" and the "World's Revolutions"; Charles Vail's "Modern Socialism" and "Principles of Scientific Socialism"; R. Rives La Monte's "Socialism, Positive and Negative."

There exists in addition a large number of pamphlets written for the sake of socialist propaganda by able writers, as A. M. Simons, Mary Wood Simons, G. D. Herron, Chas. Kerr, May Walden Kerr, E. V. Debs, T. W. Brown, Chas. H. Vail, T. Twing, Max. Hayes, J. Spargo, T. Mann. There are besides three monthlies, "The International Socialist Review," "Wilshire's Magazine" and "The Southern Socialist" ("The Comrade" was discontinued in 1905); some dailies, about thirty weeklies, in nine different languages.*

The pamphlets as well as the dailies, weeklies, and monthlies, spreading like a flood all over the country, are incessantly setting forth and discussing before the people the theoretical as well as the practical tenets of socialism. And whilst doing so this ephemeral and periodical literature, like the

*On the socialist literature in America, see M. Hillquit, History of Socialism. pp. 344, 345. Socialism by V. Cathrein, S.J. Translated by V. Gettelmann. New York 1904. p. 95.

more learned works imported from Europe or written on this side of the ocean, with multiplied voices incessantly repeat and comment on the teachings of Marx and Engels and re-echo the principles on which these two thinkers have conjointly based modern socialism.*

Nor is it possible that the socialist leaders could circulate any other kind of literature without contradicting themselves or splitting their party into hostile factions. American socialism is revolutionary and strongly opposed to revisionism. But revolutionism is based altogether on Marxian philosophy. It has, as E. Untermann says, its reason in Marx's declaration, "that the majority of the middle class are being reduced by the process of capitalist production to the rank of the economically lowest class, the working class; that the capitalist minority of the middle class and the capital-

*E. D. Hull tells us how the propagation of socialist ideas is carried on. "Our work of education never stops. In this country we have newspapers and magazines printed in nine languages besides English. Our party members own the entire capital stock of a book-publishing house in Chicago, producing exclusively Socialist books for a rapidly increasing demand, and there are others. The National Secretary has the management of a number of organizers who are always systematically expounding our principles. Each State also keeps its speakers at work spreading the light and building up the organization. There are Socialist schools in various parts of the country, the nearest to Connecticut being the Rand school of social science, an endowed institution in New York City." The Worker, Oct. 6, 1906.

ists are becoming less and less essential in production compared to the working class; that the evermore intensified economic antagonism between the capitalist and the working class, and the laws of capitalist production itself, make the downfall of the capitalist system economically inevitable and produce an intensification of the political class struggle between the two conflicting forces; that the class struggles will end in the victory of the working class, and that this class will inaugurate a system of collective production based on economic and political equalities which exclude the existence of all classes but one."*

Revisionism, on the contrary, is based on the denial of these very positions, some of its fundamental propositions amounting according to E. Untermann to this:

"That the Marxian conception of class struggle still contains some 'dangerous elements of Blanquism' and is too catastrophic; that the economic inevitability of the collapse of capitalism can not be fully demonstrated; that the middle class does not disappear from society, but simply changes its character; that the class antagonisms do not become intense, but milder."†

The platforms of the American socialist parties, as far as they are scientific, are Marxian in their terminology, their meaning, their reasoning, and

*Int. Soc. Rev. Dec. 1903. p. 322.
†Ibid.

their conclusions. The wrong of private property in the productive means, the necessity of socialized ownership, production, and distribution, the exploitation of labor by capital and the injustice of the wage system, the struggle between the working and the possessing classes, the revolution and emancipation of the proletariat, the tendency of social evolution to the establishment of the co-operative commonwealth—all which propositions are most explicitly asserted in the American platforms, as well as in the Erfurt program—are integral parts of Marx's theory, and are originally based on scientific grounds by him and Frederick Engels.

True the programs and platforms do not set forth the ultimate theoretical principles of Marxian socialism. But this is not their object. They are not intended to be philosophical commentaries on the fundamentals or learned treatises; they are but declarations of admitted principles and directions for action based on them, short, clear, and concise in language. This is well explained by W. Liebknecht.

"Before all things it must not be lost sight of that a platform should be written in clear and universally understood language; it must be short and concise; it must not be scientifically incorrect." . . . "Though a platform is to be clear, it can not be at the same time a commentary. The platform must be the principles with the de-

mands arising therefrom. However, it must comprise no explanations; it should say merely so much as is absolutely essential in the interest of clearness."

He tells us, however, where we should look for theoretical explanations when adding: "The agitators, the journalists, and the learned of the party must give the commentary."*

We ought to bear in mind these words when, as has been the case, socialists deny that they hold certain views, because they are not set forth in the platforms. The commentary, the theories, the explanations have not to be given in the platforms, but in the speeches of the agitators, in the articles and books written by the journalists and the learned men of the party.

There is, consequently, not a shadow of a doubt left concerning the attitude of the American socialist toward Marxism. Since Marx is considered as the founder of scientific socialism, and this kind of socialism is openly and solemnly professed by them; since their leaders constantly recommend the works of Marx and Engels as the sources of genuine socialist philosophy, and since, to enlighten their partisans, they circulate no other literature than such as has drawn from them its spirit and its material, it is impossible that the entire socialist body, head and members, is not thoroughly im-

*Socialism, What It Is and What It Seeks to Accomplish. pp. 34, 35.

bued with Marxian philosophy and guided by its tenets and principles. Nor is it in the face of this fact any longer possible to maintain that the Marxian theories and ideas are not accepted in America. This might have been said with some semblance of truth as long as the socialists were still merely immigrants from foreign countries, and socialism was, on that account, an exotic plant on the American soil. Twenty or thirty years ago this was in reality the case, but it is so no longer. Morris Hillquit in his "History of Socialism in the United States"* and Frederick Heath in his "Brief History of Socialism in America"† relate that the original socialist parties, being made up mostly of immigrants, failed to recruit their ranks from the native population. The reason, however, of their failure is found by either historian, not in their Marxian ideas, but in their lack of acquaintance with American institutions and customs, their ignorance of the English language, their impractical bureaucratic mode of procedure and organization, their dogmatic adherence to all canons of scientific socialism and strict enforcement of party discipline. But both historians likewise relate that for the special purpose of adapting socialism to American views and habits, the Socialist Party was formed by E. Debs.

"Presented in such a spirit" (as above de-

*Pp. 213, 214, 322.

†Pp. 41, 54.

scribed), says F. Heath, "Socialism had little attraction for the Yankee lover of freedom and so it had to make way historically for a truly democratic type, for a party standing for social democracy. The party which had this mission to perform was formed in 1897, reconstructed the following year, and is to-day the leading Socialist party in the United States."*

It has, in fact, succeeded in performing its mission.

M. Hillquit, concluding his account of the Indianapolis convention in 1901, says:

"The composition also of the convention served to demonstrate how much the character of the socialist movement had changed during the last few years. Out of 124 delegates no more than twenty-five, or about twenty per cent., were foreign-born, all the rest were native Americans." To these words he adds exultantly the remark, "Socialism had ceased to be an exotic plant in this country."†

Also, W. Mailly, formerly national secretary of the Socialist Party, bears witness to the rapid progress made in this respect. In his official report to the International Congress at Amsterdam, in 1904, he says:

"Since then (the foundation of the Socialist Party) the progress of our movement in this

*Brief History of Socialism. pp. 54, 55.

†History of Socialism. p. 339.

country has been rapid as well as sound. In 1900 the enrolled membership of our party or its predecessors probably did not exceed 5,000; and the majority of these were foreigners, mostly German immigrants; in December, 1903, the National Secretary of our party reported a due-paying membership of about 25,000, and the overwhelming majority of them consisted of American-born citizens. At the last convention of our party, May, 1904, 129 out of 184 assembled delegates were American-born."*

According to a statement made by David Goldstein, who held an influential position in the Socialist Party for eight years, but severed his connection with it in the fall of 1903, the American-born members have imbibed the genuine socialist spirit. He tells us:

"Since the socialist movement came under American management, membership changed, but not principles; on the contrary, since the influence of the English-speaking members there was a corresponding increase of loyalty to the founder of 'international revolutionary scientific socialism.' "†

To sum up, at the end of the first part of our discussion, the conclusions arrived at, modern socialism is an economic and political system calculated to democratically socialize ownership in the productive goods, the control of production, and the dis-

*The Worker. Aug. 14, 1904.

†Socialism, preface. p. viii.

tribution of the goods produced. As an organization and a social movement, it is revolutionary, political, and international. As a science, created by Karl Marx to enlighten the organization and intellectually to guide the movement, it is the philosophy of social evolution. Modern socialism, therefore, does not mean in general or vaguely an attempt at social reform, but is one definite organization, embracing the working men of all nations, with a common end clearly standing out, the emancipation of the proletariat and the establishment of the co-operative commonwealth, and with a well-concerted co-operation, the class-struggle and revolution brought about by political means and international union. Considered as a science, it is one definite theory, made up of a system of conclusions, which, drawn from the principles and the data of modern monistic science, aim at disclosing the nature and the cause of the present social evils and at devising as a remedy for them the democratic socialization of production.

Being such, modern socialism is not different in different countries, but is the same in the old and in the new world, in Germany and in America. It is identical in all countries. This unity and identity, though sometimes ignored, has been strongly asserted by the American socialist press itself. In a review of the essentials of socialism, Chas. Dobbs significantly remarks:

"The cry for 'American methods for an Ameri-

can movement' is all right in so far as it takes into account our peculiar political conditions, but there can be no more a distinctive 'American Socialism' than there can be an American Mathematics. American human nature is just like European human nature, and the law of economic determinism rules in the United States just as surely as it rules in the countries of the old world. So the conclusion is irresistible that when the cry for 'American methods for an American movement' is not merely an expression of restiveness of the impatient recruit, it is either disingenuous or the evidence of a chauvinism absurd in the light of our boasted internationalism."*

The "Worker" writes under date of April 28, 1906:

"There may be fifty-seven varieties, or twice as many, of persons who sometimes call themselves Socialists or are so called by others. But there is only one Socialism that counts in the real world, and it counts for a great deal, for more and more every year. . . . This Socialism that counts, we call it international Socialism, . . . we call it revolutionary Socialism, we call it proletarian Socialism, . . . we call it scientific Socialism. . . . Its party names vary: Social Democratic Labor Party in Russia and Holland; Social Democratic Party in Germany and Austria; Labor Party in Belgium; Social Democratic Federation, and In-

*Int. Soc. Rev. Sept. 1903. p. 132.

dependent Labor Party in Great Britain; Socialist Party in France and the United States, and so forth."

In the same strain M. Hillquit writes in the "Worker," March 23, 1907:

"Altogether it is high time that the American public abandon the myth of the 'diverse meanings of Socialism' and the 'diverse kinds of Socialism.' There is not and probably never was a theory and movement of more striking uniformity than the theory and movement of Socialism. The International Socialist movement with its thirty million adherents, at a conservative estimate, and its organized parties in about twenty-five civilized countries in both hemispheres, is all based on the same Marxian program, and follows substantially the same methods of propaganda and action. The 'diverse Socialisms' outside of the organized movement are represented by small groups of social and political dilettantes toying with problems of the universe and exercising no influence whatever on the course of the International Socialist movement."

If, indeed, there is any difference between American and European socialism, in things secondary and unessential, it certainly does not consist in this, that the former is milder and less effective than the latter, but on the contrary, that it is freer in its movement, because not hampered so much by law and government; more radical, because purely

revolutionary; more pronounced in the profession of its aims and principles both in the press and in public speeches; more rapidly progressing and more energetically struggling with the increasing power of capitalism.

As A. M. Simons says:

"Now the same spirit which carried America to the forefront of capitalist nations in a score of years, which made her productive forces greater than those of any other nation, will, when that energy is turned toward striking off the chains that bind her working class, cause her to leap forward in the race toward this greater goal of freedom at a rate that may yet leave all other nations in the rear."*

It is not our purpose to extend farther our inquiries concerning the characteristics of modern socialism. The propositions laid down, summary as they are, give us an idea of its essentials, of its end and object, and also of the features which distinguish it from all preceding communist movements. They, moreover, not only furnish us premises from which we may draw new conclusions, but also disclose to us the sources from which we may obtain all further information necessary for the discussion of the principal subject of our treatise, the religious attitude of socialism. In treating of it, we now know that we have to go back to socialist philosophy, and this, we under-

*Class Struggles in America. Chicago 1903. p. 32.

stand, we have to study not only from platforms and programs but also from the writings of the learned of the party and especially the classical works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

# PART II

## The Religion of Socialism

## CHAPTER I

### MARXIAN MATERIALISM

### Section I

#### *Introductory Remarks*

Religion, in its common acceptation, is the living union of man with God through reverence, obedience, and love. As such it supposes on the one hand a personal God, self-existent, infinitely perfect, and eternal, who, having given existence to all that is besides Himself, is the Cause, the Lord and Ruler of the universe, and who, having in particular made rational creatures in His own image, is the highest object of their knowledge and love, the Supreme Truth and Supreme Good, and hence at once their First Cause and Ultimate End. On the other hand, religion supposes in man a spiritual, immortal soul, endowed with an intellect able to rise from the visible world to the supreme perfection, power, and dominion of the invisible Deity, and with a will capable of desiring His perpetual possession and of loving His infinite goodness.

Such is and always has been religion in the conception of those who have practised it intelligently.

If we, therefore, are to examine the religious attitude of modern socialism, we must first of all inquire into its teaching concerning God and the human soul. Does socialism admit a divine Creator, distinct from and superior to the world, an infinite self-existent spirit, or does it ignore and deny His existence? Does it admit or reject a spiritual soul distinct from the body? All depends on the answer given to these questions. If it be negative, then socialism plainly disavows religion in its most commonly accepted sense. But negative it must be, if in reality the socialist teaching is materialistic. For this is the very essence of materialism, that it denies a deity distinct from the material world, and a soul distinct from man's mortal body. Thus we come to the main question, on which all others hinge: Is socialism materialistic?

For the very reason that this question touches the fundamentals of scientific socialism, we must, in order to solve it, consult the learned and above all the intellectual founders of the socialist body; for we know they have to give the deeper explanations. To proceed methodically, let us first gather whatever information we can from the original authors of the socialist theory, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, and then study their successors, who, in our day, expound and interpret socialist

thought, and, by their writings, infuse it into the present membership.

Among the works of the original authors there are chiefly two that set forth the basis of socialist philosophy in clear and logical method and are, therefore, considered as classical text-books and authentic sources. These are "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," and "Feuerbach, the Roots of Socialist Philosophy," both written by Engels, but expressing not only his own, but also Marx's thoughts and teachings. The latter work is in connection with our question of special importance, since it relates in detail the casting off of the ancient philosophical views and the gradual building up of the socialist theory on the basis of modern science. As Austin Lewis, the American translator, says in the Introduction (p. 5):

"This work is Engels' testimony with regard to the method employed by them (Marx and Engels) in arriving at their philosophical conclusions. It is the statement of the philosophical foundations of modern socialism by one who helped to lay them. . . . Step by step the argument is built up. The ghosts of old controversies long since buried are raised, to show how the doctrine imperishably associated with the name of Marx and Engels came into existence."

From the two authentic sources we learn the following facts: Marx and Engels at first belonged to the Hegelian school, the founder of which,

G. W. F. Hegel (born 1770, died 1831), was one of the classical German idealists.

According to his theory, absolute reason eternally evolves by becoming the other of itself and by again returning from its otherness to itself, or, in other words, by first creating within itself an opposition and then resolving the opposites in a higher unity. We must therefore distinguish in the course of its development three succeeding stages. In the first it is by itself, pure thought; in the second it is out of itself, nature; and in the third, it is within itself, spirit. It is peculiar to this process of evolution that it is logical, since it belongs to reason, and at the same time antagonistic, because it embraces thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, in passing through which it rises to ever more perfect actuality.

According to this conception of Hegel, thought and being are identical; and the evolution of all being is nothing else than the evolution of thought. Absolute thought or absolute being is God, who is conceived as the supreme and universal being; not for the reason that he is the self-existent cause of all things, but because he is identical with all that has existence. For eternally evolving by a thought-process, he becomes all things, and, vice versa, all things that come into being are in him and identical with him as stages of his evolution, as his thoughts and modes of consciousness. Thus Hegelian philosophy is a system of idealistic pantheism.

Still Marx and Engels could not acquiesce in pantheistic idealism, because they found in it inextricable self-contradictions. When, therefore, Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) imported into Germany the materialism of the French philosophers they espoused it enthusiastically. But their enthusiasm was shortlived. However great were the shortcomings they discovered in their first master, they stuck to the idea of evolution they had learned from him; and for this reason, however much they admired their second master, they could not but disapprove of the mechanism which, according to his materialistic theory, was the law of the universe. They therefore attempted to make of the two systems a new philosophy, eliminating those features which seemed objectionable in each of them. This was effected by adopting evolutionary materialism. For mind they substituted matter, as the ultimate source of all being and all phenomena, and, vice versa, to matter they attributed an antagonistic evolution peculiar to thought.

## Section II

### *Evolutionary Views Adopted from Hegel*

Engels gives us a full description of the three stages through which the original socialist thought passed.

He begins with setting forth those features of Hegelian philosophy which he and Marx later embodied in their philosophical system, though with some modifications.

Its greatest merit, he maintains, consists in having adopted evolutionism and, consequently, in having taken up again dialectic as the highest method of reasoning. To Hegel's mind, there is nothing stable in nature, but all is changing; nothing at rest, but all in motion; nothing final, but all progressing; all parts of the universe are coming into existence and passing away again, succeeding to such as were before, and giving place to others that are to follow.

"All that is real is reasonable and all that is reasonable is real." "But not everything which exists is, without exception, real. The attribute of reality belongs only to that which is at the same time necessary. Reality proves itself in the course of its development as necessity." And again, "what is necessary proves itself in the last instance as reasonable also."

But all that exists is not real under all circumstances and at all times; on the contrary, everything may become unreal.

"So in the course of progress all earlier reality becomes unreality, loses its necessity, its right of existence, its rationality; in the place of the dying reality comes a new vital reality, peaceable, when the old is sufficiently sensible to go to its death

without struggle, forcible, when it strives against this necessity."

"And so the Hegelian statement through the Hegelian dialectic turns to its opposite—all that is real in the course of human history becomes in the process of time irrational, and is, therefore, according to its destiny, irrational and has from the beginning inherited want of rationality, and everything which is reasonable in the minds of men is destined to become real, however much it may contradict the apparent reality of existing conditions. The statement of the rationality of everything real dissolves itself, according to the Hegelian mode of thought, into the other: 'All that stands has ultimately only such worth that it must fall.' "*

Truth, knowledge, and history are also subject to perpetual changes; as Engels goes on to say:

"Truth, which it is the province of philosophy to recognize, was no longer, according to Hegel, a collection of ready-made dogmatic statements, which once discovered must only be thoroughly learned; truth lay now in the process of knowledge itself, in the long historical development of learning, which climbs from lower to ever higher heights of learning without ever reaching the point of so-called absolute truth, where it can go no farther, where it has nothing more to look forward to, ex-

*Feuerbach. Translated by A. Lewis. Chicago 1903. pp. 38-41.

cept to fold its hands in its lap and contemplate the absolute truth already gained."

"And just as it is in the realm of philosophic knowledge, so it is with every other kind of knowledge, even with that of practical commerce. And just as little as knowledge can history find a conclusion, complete in one completed ideal condition of humanity; a completed society, a perfect state, are things which can exist only as phantasies; on the contrary, all successive historical conditions are only places of pilgrimage in the endless evolutionary progress of human society from the lower to the higher. Every step is necessary and useful for the time and circumstances to which it owes its origin, but it becomes weak and without justification under the new and higher conditions which develop little by little in its own womb; it must give way to the higher form, which in turn comes to decay and defeat. As the bourgeoisie through the greater industry, competition, and the world market destroyed the practical value of all stable and anciently honored institutions, so this dialectic philosophy destroyed all theories of absolute truth, of an absolute state of humanity corresponding with them. In face of it nothing final, absolute, or sacred exists; it assigns mortality indiscriminately, and nothing can exist before it save the unbroken process of coming into existence and passing away, the endless passing from the lower to the higher, the mere reflection of which in the

brain of the thinker it is itself. It has indeed also a conservative side, it recognizes the suitableness of a given condition, of a given knowledge and society for its time and conditions, but only so far. This conservatism of this philosophical view is relative, its revolutionary character is absolute, the only absolute which it allows to exist."*

This way of considering nature as a process of endless evolution in Engels' opinion constituted the dialectic method of reasoning and did away with the metaphysical method, which had prevailed before the rise of German idealism.

But what is meant by these methods? And in what do they differ? Engels gives us the following explanation:

"The analysis of Nature into its individual parts, the grouping of the different natural processes and objects in distinct classes, the study of the internal anatomy of organized bodies in their manifold forms—these were the fundamental conditions of the gigantic strides in our knowledge of Nature that have been made during the last four hundred years. But this method has left us as a legacy the habit of observing natural objects and processes in isolation, apart from their connection with the vast whole; of observing them in repose, not in motion; as constants, not as essentially variables; in their death, not in their life. And when

*Feuerbach. pp. 38-43.

this way of looking at things was transferred by Bacon and Locke from natural science to philosophy, it begot the narrow metaphysical mode of thought peculiar to the last century."

"To the metaphysician, things and their mental reflexes, ideas, are isolated, are to be considered one after the other and apart from each other as objects of investigation fixed, rigid, given once for all. He thinks in absolutely irreconcilable antitheses. . . . For him a thing either exists or does not exist, a thing can not at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another; cause and effect stand in rigid antithesis one to another."*

"Dialectics, on the other hand, comprehends things and their representations, ideas, in their essential connection, concatenation, motion, origin, and ending."

"Nature is the proof of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this proof with very rich materials increasing daily,

*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. Translated by E. Aveling. Chicago 1903. pp. 30-34. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the characterization of the metaphysical method as given above is not conformable with historical truth. Metaphysics did not originate when Bacon and Locke transferred the way of looking at things from natural science to philosophy, but existed long before and is found fully developed in the works of Aristotle; nor is the metaphysician unable to see mutual relations, motion, and evolution where they really exist in things, and are not merely projected on them from the mind of the theorist.

and thus has shown that, in the last resort, Nature works dialectically and not metaphysically, that she does not move in the eternal oneness of a perpetually recurring circle, but goes through a real historical evolution."

"An exact representation of the universe, of its evolution, of the development of mankind, and of the reflection of this evolution in the minds of men, can therefore only be obtained by the methods of dialectics with its constant regard to the innumerable actions and reactions of life and death, of progressive and retrogressive changes. And in this spirit the new German philosophy has worked."*

German philosophy, Engels tells us, culminated in his (Hegel's) system.

"In this system for the first time the whole world, natural, historical, intellectual, is represented as a process, *i.e.*, as in constant motion, change, transformation, development, and the attempt is made to trace out the internal connection that makes a continuous whole of all this movement and development. From this point of view, the history of mankind no longer appeared as a wild whirl of senseless deeds of violence, all equally condemnable at the judgment seat of mature philosophic reason, and which are best forgotten as quickly as possible, but as the process of evolution

*Ibid. pp. 33, 34. See also Landmarks of Scientific Socialism. "Anti-Duehring," by F. Engels. Translated by Austin Lewis. Chicago 1907. pp. 111, 169-175.

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of man himself. It was now the task of the intellect to follow the gradual march of this process through all its devious ways, and to trace the inner law running through all its apparently accidental phenomena."*

Notwithstanding these merits, Engels calls the Hegelian philosophy a colossal miscarriage. For this assertion he advances the following reasons: Hegel, though the most encyclopedic mind of his time, was bounded by the limited extent both of his own knowledge and of that of his age. Moreover he was an idealist.

"To him the thoughts within his brain were not the more or less abstract pictures of actual things and processes, but conversely things and their evolution were only the realized pictures of the 'Idea' existing somewhere from eternity before the world was. This way of thinking turned everything upside down and completely reversed the actual connection of things in the world."

Lastly his system was suffering from an internal and incurable contradiction.

"Upon the one hand, its essential proposition was the conception that human history is a process of evolution, which, by its very nature, can not find its intellectual final term in the discovery of any so-called absolute truth. But, on the other hand, it laid claim to being the very essence of this absolute truth. A system of natural and historical

*Ibid. p. 36.

knowledge, embracing everything, and final for all time, is a contradiction to the fundamental law of dialectic reasoning."*

This internal contradiction was a conflict between Hegel's system and his method. As a philosopher, he was compelled to build a system of philosophy; and because this must come to an end somewhere, he had to close with some kind of absolute truth. Accordingly, he had to put an end to his logical and real process. This end could be no other than the knowledge of the absolute idea as obtained in his philosophy, and the realization of the same idea, as effected, according to his philosophy of Rights, in a limited monarchy.

The dialectic method, on the contrary, implies that eternal truth is nothing else than the never-ending logical process itself, and that, therefore, it is never absolute, and knowledge is never final, but always progressing from the lower to the higher.†

In consequence the Hegelian school was very soon split into a right and a left wing; the former, the orthodox Hegelians, adhering to the system and, therefore, conservative; the other, the young Hegelians, pursuing the method and, therefore, revolutionary in politics, hostile to any positive religion, and leaning to French materialism.

*Ibid. pp. 37, 38.

†Feuerbach. pp. 44, 45.

## Section III

### *Materialism Adopted from L. Feuerbach*

At this juncture appeared Ludwig Feuerbach's work on the "Essence of Christianity." It was to put an end to the conflict by a magic stroke as it were. Engels says:

"With one blow it cut the contradiction, in that it placed materialism on the throne again without any circumlocution. Nature exists independently of all philosophies. It is the foundation upon which we, ourselves products of nature, are built. Outside man and nature nothing exists, and the higher beings, which our religious phantasies have created, are only the fantastic reflection of our individuality. The cord was broken, the system was scattered and destroyed, the contradiction, since it only existed in the imagination, was solved."

"One must himself have experienced the delivering power of this book to get an idea of it."

"The enthusiasm was universal; we were all for the moment followers of Feuerbach. How enthusiastically Marx greeted the new idea and how much he was influenced by it, in spite of all his critical reservations, one may read in the 'Holy Family'" (1845).*

Engels takes pains to prove that Feuerbach's system was truly materialistic. He first explains

*Ibid. p. 53.

what is understood by materialism and how it originated.

In the earliest times of savagery, out of universal ignorance arose the conception of the immortality of the soul and of the existence of gods. Not knowing the nature of their being and stirred by apparitions in dreams, men arrived at the idea that thought and sensation were not acts of their bodies, but of a special soul dwelling in the body and deserting it at death. But then what was the destiny of the soul when it forsook the body? There being no reason why it should also be subject to death, they supposed it to be immortal; though immortality appeared to them not as a consolation, but was believed in as a necessary fate and often as an unavoidable fortune. Likewise, not being able to account for the forces of nature, the savage personified them. The supernatural beings thus created were at first indefinitely multiplied, and under an influence of religion endowed with ever greater powers, but later on, by a progress of abstraction or "distillation," from the many more or less limited and mutually limited gods, the idea of one, all-embracing god was formed in the minds of men.

This night of utter ignorance lasted for many centuries, until at last mankind awoke from the long winter sleep of the Christian Middle Ages. Then it was that thinking men began to raise the question, what was first, spirit or matter? and what

was the beginning of the world? did it exist from all eternity or was it created by God?

"As this question was answered in this way or that, the philosophers were divided into two great camps. The one party which placed the origin of spirit before that of nature and therefore in the last instance accepted creation in some form or other—made the camp of idealism. The others, who recognized nature as the source, belong to the various schools of materialism. Idealism, and materialism, originally not used in any other sense, are not employed here in any other sense."*

Having given these explanations, Engels goes on to relate how Feuerbach, at first a young Hegelian, turned from idealism to materialism.

"The evolution of Feuerbach is that of a Hegelian to materialism—not of an orthodox Hegelian, indeed—an evolution which from a definite point makes a complete breach with the idealistic system of his predecessor. With irresistible force he brings himself to the view that the Hegelian idea of the existence of the absolute idea before the world, the pre-existence of the logical categories before the universe came into being, is nothing else than the phantastical survival of the belief in the existence of a supramundane creator; that the material, sensible, actual world, to which we ourselves belong, is the only reality, and that our consciousness and thought, however supernatural they

*Feuerbach. pp. 56-59.

may be, are only evidences (products) of a material bodily organ, the brain. Matter is not a product of the mind, but mind itself is only the highest product of matter. This is, of course, pure materialism."*

Notwithstanding the enthusiasm with which Feuerbach's materialistic philosophy was received, it proved unsatisfactory later on. Engels finds several essential shortcomings in it.

First of all, Feuerbach's conception of materialism was deficient. He confused materialism in general with the special forms under which it appeared in the eighteenth century, or which were given to it by vulgarizing pedlers, such as Buechner, Vogt, and Moleshott, in the nineteenth century. The materialism of the eighteenth century was overwhelmingly mechanical, and, owing to the philosophical theories then in vogue and the yet primitive state of the natural sciences, altogether incapable of representing the universe as a process of evolution.

Nature was known to be in motion, but this motion was, according to the universally accepted ideas, turned eternally in a circle and, therefore, never advanced from the spot and produced the same results over and over again.†

Moreover, Feuerbach did not give the materialistic theory any further development.

*Ibid. pp. 63, 64.

†Ibid. pp. 65, 68.

"Feuerbach held quite correctly that scientific materialism is the foundation of the building of human knowledge, but it is not the building itself. For we live not only in nature, but in human society, and this has its theory of development and its science no less than nature."

"It was necessary, therefore, to bring the science of society, that is, the so-called historical and philosophical sciences, into harmony with the materialistic foundations and to rebuild upon them. But this was not granted to Feuerbach. Here he stuck, in spite of the foundations, held in the confining bonds of idealism."*

He built on materialism a philosophy of religion, which consisted in love, chiefly sexual, and a system of ethics, the basis of which was man's innate desire of happiness, and considered both these sciences as absolute and valid for all times and nations. Hence Engels finally dismisses him with the remark:

"He stood as a composite philosopher; the under half of him was materialist, the upper half idealist. He was not an apt critic of Hegel, but simply put him aside as of no account, while he himself, in comparison with the encyclopedic wealth of the Hegelian system, contributed nothing of any positive value, except a bombastic religion of love and a thin, impotent system of ethics."†

*Ibid. pp. 70, 71.

†Ibid. p. 92.

## Section IV

### *Marx's Philosophy, Evolutionary Materialism*

From the breaking up, however, of the Hegelian school arose another which, in Engels' opinion, completely succeeded in rebuilding the historical and philosophical sciences on materialistic foundations. This new school was founded by Karl Marx. It adopted materialism from Feuerbach, but rejected his metaphysical method, and, vice versa, rejected Hegel's idealism, but adopted his dialectic method. In other words, it taught evolutionary materialism.

We have seen above with what enthusiasm Marx and Engels hailed Feuerbach's materialistic theory set forth in his "Essence of Christianity." When later on they repudiated him, it was not his materialism as such that displeased them, but his lack of evolutionary views and his utter failure to build up the historical and philosophical sciences on materialistic foundations. And when, to improve his system, they substituted the dialectical for the metaphysical method, because they conceived of the world not as an unchangeable whole, but as a process of endless evolution, they did not return to a supramundane cause of the universe, or a distinction between spirit and matter, soul and body, or the priority of thought to sensation. Also in the new school founded by them

eternal matter was regarded as the ultimate source of all that is, because all was evolved from it, both physical force and mental power; and material or organic laws were considered as governing with inevitable necessity alike natural phenomena and human events. All this is held and plainly set forth in Engels' "Feuerbach," as we shall see even more distinctly in the sequel.

Also in some of their other works, both Marx and Engels profess plain and unmitigated materialism. As L. Woltmann, one of the most learned exponents of socialism and a revisionary socialist himself, has proven, Marx in his "Holy Family" approves of propositions like the following: "An immaterial substance is a self-contradiction just as well as an incorporeal body." "Body, being, and substance are one and the selfsame real idea." "Thought is inseparable from thinking matter." In "Capital" Marx teaches that spiritual as well as physical faculties are inherent in the human body, that man is a product of nature and consists of natural elements changed into a human form.*

Engels is still more outspoken. In his "Anti-Duehring" (Duehring's "Umwälzungen der Wissenschaft") he holds the following propositions: "The real unity of the world is its materiality." "Every form of being is matter." "Motion is the

*L. Woltmann, Der Historische Materialismus. Düsseldorf 1900. p. 299.

mode of being of matter." "Life is the mode of being of the albuminoids." "Motion as well as matter can neither be created nor destroyed." "Beyond motion and matter exists nothing." Seven times he asserts in the same work the descent of man from the brute.* In an article in the "Neue Zeit" (XIV, n. 44) he maintains that man was evolved from the ape by labor.†

There is no doubt, then, that the socialistic school founded by Marx adopted materialism from Feuerbach. But as to the method, it repudiated him and returned to Hegel. It could not, however, employ the latter's dialectic method in materialistic philosophy without inverting and completely reconstructing it. Engels gives us an ingenious explanation of the way in which this transformation of the dialectic method was brought about.

"According to Hegel, the dialectic development apparent in nature and in history—that is, a causative, connected progression from the lower to the higher—in spite of all zig-zag movements and momentary setbacks, is only the stereotype of the self-progression of the idea from eternity, whither one does not know, but independent at all events of the thought of any human brain. This topsy-turvy ideology had to be put aside. We conceived

*Socialism. V. Cathrein. p. 121.

†Der Historische Materialismus. Dr. Ludwig Woltmann. Düsseldorf 1900. p. 214.

of ideas as materialistic, as pictures of real things, instead of real things as pictures of this or that state of the absolute idea. Thereupon, the dialectic became reduced to the knowledge of the universal laws of motion—as well of the outer world as of the thought of man—two sets of laws which are identical as far as matter is concerned, but which differ as regards expression, in so far as the mind of man can employ them consciously; while in nature and up to now in human history, for the most part, they accomplish themselves unconsciously in the form of external necessity, through an endless succession of apparent accidents. Hereupon the dialectic of the Idea became itself merely the conscious reflex of the dialectic evolution of the real world, and, therefore, the dialectic of Hegel was turned upside down, or rather it was placed upon its feet instead of on its head, where it was standing before."*

The same view is held by Marx in his preface to the second edition of "Capital."†

"My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel the life-process of the human brain, *i.e.*, the process of thinking, which, under the name of the 'Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the

*Feuerbach. pp. 95, 96.

†Preface to the second edition of Capital. Translated into English by S. Moore and E. Aveling. p. xxx.

real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea.' With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought. . . . With him it (dialectic) is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell."

Dialectic thus reconstructed ceased to be idealistic and became thoroughly materialistic. But, though Hegel's method was changed and turned upside down, the revolutionary side of his philosophy was retained. The evolutionary conception of the world once being accepted, though from a materialistic point of view, there remains nothing final, necessary, unchangeable, no permanent distinction between true and false, good and evil.

"If one proceeds steadily in his investigations from this historic point, then a stop is put, once for all, to the demand for final solutions and for eternal truths; one is firmly conscious of the necessary limitations of all acquired knowledge, of its hypothetical nature, owing to the circumstances under which it has been gained. One can not be imposed upon any longer by the inflated unsubstantial antitheses of the older metaphysics of true and false, good and evil, identical and differentiated, necessary and accidental; one knows that these antitheses have only a relative significance, that that which is recognized as true now, has its

concealed and later-developing false side, just as that which is recognized as false, its true side, by virtue of which it can later on prevail as the truth; that so-called necessity is made up of the merely accidental, and that the acknowledged accidental is the form behind which necessity conceals itself, and so on."*

The materialistic-dialectic method, as Engels goes on to remark, has made it possible to build up a system of human knowledge on materialistic foundations. It has first of all done away with the old metaphysics and philosophy.

"We have now arrived at a point where we can show the connection between changes in nature, not only in specific cases, but also in the relation of specific changes to the whole, and so give a bird's-eye view of the interrelation of nature in a proximately scientific form by means of the facts shown by empirical science itself. To furnish this complete picture was formerly the task of the so-called philosophy of nature. . . . At present, when the results of the investigation of nature need only be conceived of dialectically, that is, in the sense of their mutual interconnection, to arrive at a system of nature sufficient for our time, when the dialectical character of this interconnection forces itself into the metaphysically trained minds of experimental scientists, against their will, to-day a philosophy of nature is finally disposed of,

*Feuerbach. pp. 97, 98.

every attempt at its resurrection would not only be superfluous, it would even be a step backward."*

Engels makes the same statement in another of his works:

"That which still survives of all earlier philosophy is science of thought and its laws—formal logics and dialectics. Everything else is subsumed in the positive science of Nature and history."†

Socialist philosophy, however, has undertaken only the building up of the positive science of history on a materialistic basis, and it is thought to have fully succeeded in accomplishing this task.

The employment of the dialectic method revolutionized the historical sciences. Here also, by means of it, the artificial interrelations are set aside, and the real interconnections of events detected. This being done, the study of history will culminate in the discovery of the universal laws of human progress, that is, of laws which are imminent in and common to all nature. Engels does not deny a difference between the history of the growth of human society and that of nature. He says:

"In nature are to be found—as far as we leave the reaction of man upon nature out of sight—mere unconscious blind agents which act upon one another, and in their interplay the universal law

*Ibid. pp. 101, 102.

†Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. pp. 39, 40.

realizes itself. . . . On the contrary, in the history of society the mere actors are all endowed with consciousness; they are agents imbued with deliberation or passion, men working toward an appointed end; nothing appears without an intentional purpose, without an end desired."*

But important as this distinction is conceded to be by Engels, it makes, in his opinion, no difference to the fact that the course of history is governed by inner universal laws like nature.

"Here also, in spite of the wished-for ends of all the separate individuals, accident for the most part is apparent on the surface. That which is willed but rarely happens. In the majority of instances, the numerous desired ends cross and interfere with each other, and either these ends are utterly incapable of realization or the means are ineffectual. So, the innumerable conflicts of individual wills and individual agents in the realm of history reach a conclusion which is on the whole analogous to that in the realm of nature, which is without definite purpose. The ends of action are intended, but the results which follow from the actions are not intended, or in so far as they appear to correspond with the end desired, in their final results, are quite different from the conclusion wished. Historical events in their entirety, therefore, appear to be likewise controlled by chance. But even where, according to superficial observa-

*Feuerbach. p. 103.

tion, accident plays a part, it is, as a matter of fact, consistently governed by unseen, internal laws, and the only question remaining, therefore, is to discover these laws."*

Having thus made good the conformity between evolution of nature and the growth of human society, Engels sets out to discover the impelling forces in human history, and to ascertain the laws controlling evolution. His reasoning is in substance the following.

To find the impelling forces which stand behind the historical figures and constitute the final impulses of history, we must not search so much into the motives which actuate single individuals as those which prompt masses, whole classes of people and entire nations to such enduring actions as bring on important changes in society. But it is no longer a secret to any one that, since the establishment of the great industries, the whole political fight for supremacy has been between two classes; first between the landed aristocracy and the middle classes, and later on between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. And it is just as clear that in this fight the economic interests were the most important, so much so that the political forces were only means subservient to them. The economic interests, therefore, must be considered as the real forces and final impulses of history.†

*Ibid. pp. 104, 105.
†Ibid. pp. 107-110.

Engels arrives at the same conclusion in his "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific," and expresses it tersely in the following terms:*

"The new facts made imperative a new examination of all past history. Then it was seen that *all* past history, with the exception of its primitive stages, was the history of class-struggles; that these warring classes of society are always the product of the mode of production and exchange; in a word, of the *economic* conditions of their times."

"The final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch."†

After the ultimate factor of historical events has thus been ascertained, the law of social evolution can be determined. It must, of course, be a law harmonious with the dialectic method taken over from Hegel. According to him all evolution proceeds by the rise and reconciliation of contrasts and is, therefore, antagonistic. To the founders of socialism, likewise, the social evolution is brought about by antagonisms that rise in the bosom of society. It proceeds, according to Marx, in the following manner.

*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. p. 41.
†Ibid. p. 43.

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"In a certain stage of development, the material productive forces come into conflict with the then-existing conditions of production, or, in other words, with the conditions of ownership, within which production had moved hitherto. From being forms of development, these conditions change to shackles fettering the productive forces. Then there occurs an epoch of social revolution."*

Or, as Engels puts it in shorter form:

"In the modes of production and exchange, changes have silently taken place with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping."†

The conflict between new economic conditions and the existing social order results in a class-struggle, which ends in a revolution, the introduction of a new form of society, higher and more perfect than the one existing before. Engels accounts in this way for the transition from feudal to bourgeois society, which already has taken place, and from bourgeois society to the co-operative commonwealth, which is still to come.

In the Middle Ages, the time of the feudal system, there was, as he explains at full length, only individual production on a small scale and for immediate consumption; the productive means were ungainly, petty, and dwarfed, and the exchange of

*Preface to Political Economy.

†Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. pp. 45, 46.

commodities limited. But little by little this primitive industry was transformed, first by simple cooperation and manufacture, then by concentration of the means of production into great workshops. As a consequence, the means of production became social. Then the bourgeois appeared, who owned the new means of production, appropriated the products and turned them into commodities. But soon a conflict arose between the existing social order and the method of production. The feudal system had conferred privileges upon individuals, entire social ranks, and local corporations, and was held together by hereditary ties of subordination. The bourgeoisie required freedom of competition, personal liberty, and equality. In the struggle which ensued, feudalism succumbed and upon its ruin the bourgeoisie built its reign. The new method of production developed in ever wider dimensions. Under the law of untrammeled competition the capitalist rose to power; in his capacity as owner of the means of production, he also appropriated the products and turned them into commodities, in order to gain further profit and accumulate wealth. Again a collision followed with the existing order. Production had become a social act, but exchange and appropriation continued under the laws in force to be acts of individuals; the social production was appropriated by the individual capitalist. This is the fundamental contradiction, whence all other contradictions

arise; antagonism between the proletariat and bourgeoisie, socialized organization in the individual factory and social anarchy in production as a whole, perfection of machinery and constantly growing displacement of labor, excess of means of production and products and consequently of wealth, and excess of laborers without employment and without means of subsistence. Finally the mode of production rises in rebellion against the mode of appropriation and exchange; the bourgeoisie are convicted of incapacity further to manage their own social productive forces. The contradictions are solved by the proletarian revolution. The proletariat seizes the public power and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production into public property. Socialized production upon a predetermined plan will become henceforth possible, and, when fully developed, will do away with classes in society. The co-operative commonwealth will then come into existence, in which all will be free, equal, and happy.*

The manner in which a process is always and everywhere going on and must go on is considered as its law. The law, therefore, of social evolution is antagonism and revolution; antagonism between the existing social order and new economic conditions, between economic interests, between

*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. pp. 46-87. Feuerbach. pp. 110, 111.

propertied and property-less classes; revolution which consists in the introduction of new forms into society as the outcome of class-struggle and the final solution of contradictions. This is a law not invented by man, but existing objectively outside of the human mind, independent of thought and purpose; a law working with inevitable necessity, as all nature does, and subsumed in the one universal law by which the evolution of all living beings in the universe is controlled, the struggle for existence.

By assuming the economic conditions as the ultimate factor in history, the socialist theory is said to have accomplished its task. It has built up the historical sciences on materialistic foundations, or, as Engels puts it, propounded a materialistic treatment of history. It has, indeed, posited a cause of historical evolution which is prior to thought and purpose and is altogether material, and has assigned a law for it which is identical with the one governing the course of all nature.

The socialist school has not undertaken to build up the natural sciences on the basis of materialism. It has left this task to the scientists. They, too, are said to have worked successfully. Among them too, rose a master mind, which by the employment of the dialectic method, the theory of evolution, has based the science of nature on materialism. As Marx discovered evolution in the history of mankind, so Charles Darwin found it in biology. These two modern thinkers, working along

the same lines and employing the same method, are said to have made evolutionary materialism a universal, all-comprising science. For doing away with the supersensible world and supersensible truths, they have abolished metaphysics, and, admitting no other realities than the material universe, have reduced all reasoned knowledge to the science of nature and the science of history, or the evolution of society. And these two sciences again were brought into harmony and worked into one complete and general system, first by admitting that from matter as the ultimate source has been evolved all life, individual and social, animal and rational, and secondly by accounting for this universal evolution by one supreme and general law. Thus they have come not only to build up materialistic monism, but also to give it out as the only true philosophy, encyclopedic in its scope, and based on experience as the sole real and undeniable ground.

Marx's philosophy, thus, is entirely materialistic, a province of materialistic monism, but is different from all previous systems of materialism, in that it employs the dialectic method borrowed from Hegel and accounts for the history of mankind by the theory of evolution, and different also from any other sort of evolutionism, ancient and modern, in that it traces back the history of society to the economic conditions as the ultimate cause and assigns class antagonism and revolution as the general law of social evolution.

# CHAPTER II

## POST-MARXIAN MATERIALISM

### SECTION I

### *Marx's Materialism Adopted and Developed*

"As IDEALISM has passed through a series of evolutionary developments, so also has materialism, with each epoch-making discovery in the department of natural science, been obliged to change its form."* These few words of Engels not only outlined the progress of materialistic thought before Marx, but also forecast the transformations which it was to undergo after him. Evolutionary materialism is, indeed, no absolute and unchangeable system of philosophy, nor can it be considered as such consistently with its dialectic method, according to which no condition of things and no knowledge of the mind is final and complete. Dependent as it is on the natural sciences, it must at all times bring its positions into harmony with their advance. And what proves a still greater necessity of change, is the fact that again and again challenged to account for the teleology, the order, and the beauty of the material universe as

*Feuerbach. p. 65.

well as the wonderful intellectual and moral achievements of mankind, and frequently attacked, refuted, and convicted of inadequacy and self-contradictions, it is compelled continually to shift its basis, to drop some of its dogmas, to qualify others, to make concessions, and to adopt opinions formerly disowned.

It is necessary, therefore, to inquire whether and to what extent materialism, as taught by Marx and Engels, has changed of late, if we are to become thoroughly acquainted with the forms under which it is admitted or rejected by the socialists of to-day.

It is an undeniable fact that up to this day there is a large number of orthodox Marxists who profess the tenets of the founders of socialism with remarkable faithfulness, admitting no substantial change whatever, though, in the meantime, they do not fail to develop it within its own limits. But there are also those who give a freer interpretation to the Marxian theory and refuse to give adhesion to it, unless materially changed and modified.

Among the orthodox followers we must count first of all Liebknecht, Bebel, and Kautsky. They always professed and upheld the entire Marxian theory; they followed their master in his profession of atheism, taught with him the descent of man from the brute, and staunchly defended his materialistic conception of history, according to

which the economic conditions are the ultimate and principal factor in historical evolution, and by which, consequently, "the materialistic treatment of the historical sciences" is accomplished. Their example is generally followed by those who nowadays profess orthodox Marxism.

A development was given to Marx's materialism by Joseph Dietzgen (born 1828, died 1888). He was from the beginning a sincere admirer of Marx, to whom he wrote in 1867: "You have expressed for the first time in a clear, resistless, scientific form what will be from now on the *conscious* tendency of historical development, namely, to subordinate the hitherto blind forces of the process of production to human consciousness."

Marx, conversely, in the International Socialist Congress at The Hague, in 1872, introduced him to the assembled delegates with the words: "Here is our philosopher." Dietzgen in his works, chiefly in "The Nature of the Human Brain Work" (1869) and "The Positive Outcome of Philosophy" (1887), undertook to show the development of the human thought from material conditions. The importance of this scientific undertaking is much insisted on by Untermann. He says:

"The understanding of the process of thinking was the crucial point without which the materialist conception lacked completeness. . . . Without it the building of materialist monism would

have been imperfect. True, Marx and Engels were able to show, by the data of history itself, that material conditions shaped human thought, which resulted in historical events. Not until Dietzgen had shown that the human mind itself was a product of that greater historical process of which human history is but a small part, the cosmic process, and that the human faculty of thought produced its thoughts by means of the natural environment, was the historical materialism of Marx fully explained and the riddle of the universe solved, so far as human thought processes were concerned."*

We find, however, orthodox followers of Marx not only in Germany, for his revolutionary materialism is adopted also by socialist authors of other countries.

Let us first hear Enrico Ferri, one of the leaders of Italian socialists, whom the "International Socialist Review" of Chicago calls "perhaps the foremost exponent of Socialism now living,"† and whose work "Socialism and Modern Science," recently translated into English, it introduces with the following recommendation:

"Since the translation of Marx's 'Capital' there has been no greater contribution to the socialist movement in the English-speaking world than is afforded by this work. Under the title 'Socialisme

*Int. Soc. Rev. Aug. 1905. pp. 99, 100; April 1906. pp. 605-610.
†Ibid. April 1903. p. 592.

et Science Positive' it had already become one of the classics of the French, Belgian and Italian movement. . . . The chapters on 'Socialism as a Consequence of Darwinism' and 'Evolution and Socialism' constitute the most logical exposition on the fundamentals of socialism to be found in the English language."*

Ferri affirms that there is an intrinsic connection between Darwinism and socialism. He says:

"Not only is Darwinism not in contradiction with socialism, but it constitutes one of its fundamental scientific premises. As Virchow justly remarked, socialism is nothing but a logical and vital corollary in part of Darwinism, in part of Spencerian evolution."†

He teaches the successive evolution from lower forms not only of man, but also of society and of the whole universe, as is evident from the following clauses:

"In the natural biological domain, the free play of natural (cosmiques) forces and conditions causes a progressive advance or ascent of living forms from the microbe up to man."‡

"At the end of the nineteenth century all the inductive sciences agree in recognizing that society, the social aggregate, is a fact of Nature, inseparable from life, in the vegetable species as in the

*Ibid. Feb. 1901. p. 505.

†Socialism and Modern Science. Translated by Robert Rives La Monte. Chicago 1904. p. 59.

‡Ibid. p. 51.

animal species, from the lowest animal colonies of zoophytes up to societies of mammals (herbivora), and to human society."*

"Modern science starts from the magnificent synthetic conception of monism, that is to say, of a single substance underlying all phenomena—matter and force being recognized as inseparable and indestructible, continuously evolving in a succession of forms—forms relative to their respective times and places. It has radically changed the direction of modern thought and directed it toward the grand idea of universal evolution."†

Concerning God, the Creator of the world, Ferri writes:

"It can not be denied that these theories (of Darwin and Spencer), by rendering the idea of causality more and more inflexible and universal, lead necessarily to the negation of God, since there always remains this question: And God, who created him? And if it is replied that God has always existed, the same reply may be flung back by asserting that the universe has always existed. To use the phrase of Ardigò, human thought is only able to conceive the chain which binds effects to causes as terminating at a given point, purely conventional."

"God, as Laplace says, is an hypothesis of which exact science has no need; he is, according

*Ibid. p. 70.
†Ibid. p. 95.

to Herzen, at the most an *x,* which represents not the *unknowable,* as Spencer and Dubois Raymond contend, but all that humanity does not yet know. Therefore, it is a variable *x* which decreases in direct ratio to the progress of the discoveries of science."*

Antonio Labriola, another prominent exponent of socialism, whose work, "Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History," has received the highest recommendation both in Europe and in America, is no less explicit than his countryman Ferri in the profession of evolutionary materialism. He teaches the descent of man from the brute and his evolution by the struggle for existence.

"Man is without doubt an animal, and he is linked by connections of descent and affinity to other animals. He has no privileges of origin or of elementary structure, and his organism is merely one particular case of general origin. His first immediate field was that of simple nature not modified by work, and from thence are derived the imperious and inevitable conditions of the struggle for existence, with the consequent forms of adaptation."†

He denies the freedom of will.

"The will does not choose of itself, as was sup-

*Ibid. p. 60.

†Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History. Translated by Charles Kerr. Chicago 1904. p. 115.

posed by the inventors of *free will,* that product of the impotency of the psychological analysis not yet arrived at maturity. Volitions, in so far as they are facts of consciousness, are particular expressions of the psychic mechanism. They are a result, first of necessities, and then, of all that precedes them up to the very elementary organic impulses."*

Having related that the accelerated movement of scientific knowledge led to naturalism, atheism, materialism, and the installation of the domain of reason, and that the government of the Directory in France was the first to introduce with Lamarck free science at the University and at the Academy, he concludes with the remark:

"This science, which the bourgeois epoch has, through its inherent conditions, stimulated and made to grow like a giant, is the only heritage of past centuries which communism accepts and adopts without reserve."†

With these views a third Italian socialist leader, A. Loria, falls in when he says that man's powerlessness over matter, his ignorance of the economic conditions in which he lives, his constant fear in the presence of the indiscernible and mysterious processes constitute the pedestal upon which the throne of the Godhead is erected.‡

*Ibid. p. 206.

†Ibid. p. 215.

‡The Economic Conditions of Society. Translated by Lindley M. Keasbey. London 1899. p. 24.

Paul Lafargue, a prominent French socialist, is just as extreme in his materialistic views as are Engels and Marx, his father-in-law. The idea both of the soul and of God, the Creator, is to him an invention of the savages.

"The idea of the soul and of its survival is an invention of the savages who allowed themselves an immaterial and immortal spirit to explain the phenomena of dreams."

"Primitive man starting out with a mistaken explanation of dreams elaborated the elements which later served for the creation of one sole God, who is, when defined, nothing more than a spirit, more powerful than the other spirits."*

The civilized bourgeois, notwithstanding the protest of modern science, retained God as the unknowable cause of the changes constantly occurring in the social order, just as the savages admitted Him as the unknowable cause of the natural phenomena.

"If the unknown elements of the natural environment made necessary for the savage and barbarian the idea of a God, creator and ruler of the world, the unknown elements of the social environment made necessary for the bourgeois the idea of a God who shall distribute the wealth stolen from the manual and intellectual wage-workers, dispense blessings and curses, re-

*Social and Philosophical Studies. Translated by C. Kerr. Chicago 1906. pp. 12, 13.

ward good deeds, avenge injuries, and repair wrongs."*

The immateriality of the human mind is denied by Lafargue in the most outspoken and shocking terms:

"Man, probably when barbarous tribes began to differentiate into classes, separated himself from the animal kingdom and raised himself to the rank of a supernatural being, whose destinies are the constant preoccupation of the gods and the celestial bodies. Later on, he isolated the brain from the other organs to make it the seat of the soul. Natural science reintegrates man in the animal series of which he is the sum and crown; the socialist philosophy will restore the brain to the series of organs. The brain has the property of thinking as the stomach has that of digesting. It can not think but by the aid of ideas, which it fabricates with the materials furnished it by the natural environment and the social or artificial environment in which man evolves."†

Among the American socialists Ernest Untermann of Chicago is undoubtedly the most outspoken materialist. From his critique of Charles Kendall Franklin's "Socialization of Humanity" and a series of articles on the "Evolution of the Theory of Evolution" in the "International Social-

*Ibid. pp. 33, 34.

†Ibid. p. 91. Let it be observed once for all that C. Kerr intended the translation of Lafargue's book as reading material for the working men. See footnote to page 57.

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ist Review," now published also in book form under the title of "Science and Revolution," we glean the following system of evolutionary materialism:

*Matter and mind are inseparable and co-eternal.*

"The question as to which was first, matter or mind, can simply be answered by declaring that the one can not be without the other, that the one exists as long as the other, that they are both eternal and that their origin is co-eternal."

*Life, perception, and mind are in all forms of matter.*

"There is life in an inorganic chemical compound, in a crystal, in a plant, in any animal, and all of them are continually adjusting themselves to environment."

"I am compelled, by the dialectic method, to regard 'sense' as the result of external reactions in any form of matter, whether in animal, plant, or mineral organism."

"I object to the term inanimate bodies and maintain that any form of matter has its own degree of sensibility, its own ability to register impressions, its own degree of mind."

*The human mind is not different in kind from that which is common to all matter.*

"The adjustment of all matter to its environment is mind and develops mind."

"The human mind as we know it is but the

present-day form of adjustment in a special organism."

"The means by which the human mind discriminates and becomes *conscious* of its discriminations are more specialized and complicated than those of the tuning-fork, but the tuning-fork is as conscious in its way as the human mind in another."

"The difference between the consciousness of a crystal and of a human brain is one of more or less control over environment, but it is not a difference between consciousness and unconsciousness."

"It is not true that only the human mind can perceive of a purpose. Purpose presupposes a will. What we call purpose or will or design is only a certain form of following stimuli. Whether we have this or that purpose is not a question of free will, but of evolutionary forces embodied in us. Any two atoms follow stimuli of the environment as well as our brain does, and the chemical affinities, in forcing certain combinations of chemicals and preventing others, follow their purpose quite as 'freely,' comparatively, as do two lovers rushing into one another's arms."*

*Neither the soul nor the faculty of human thought are different from the human organism.*

"The machinery of the human soul consists of the sum total of all the organs and tissues of the

*Int. Soc. Rev. Sept. 1904. pp. 157-161.

body, and its reactions on internal and external stimuli constitute the life of the soul."*

"Labor is a function of labor-power, labor-power is the latent (potential) energy of the human body, and it performs its function by converting energy into motion. Quite analogically, thinking is a function of the faculty of thought. This faculty is the labor-power of the human brain, the latent energy of the protoplasmatic system of the human body. The brain performs its function by converting its latent energy into motion, or thought, in response to all the stimuli sent to it by way of the protoplasmatic system. This function is a labyrinth of objective reactions and subjective counter-reactions. It is all this as a part of the entire natural universe, and it is nothing else. The difference between conscious and unconscious, or subconscious, thought is purely one of the intensity of stimuli and reaction. And when physiochemical biology will have analyzed this labyrinth of processes, traced its fundamental reactions in the laboratory and connected them with the final source of all, the universe, man will know all that his faculty of thought can find out about itself and other riddles of the universe."†

*The origin of organic life must be accounted for by evolution, and man's origin by descent from the brute.*

*Ibid. p. 164.

†Ibid. Sept. 1905. p. 162.

"The human mind is the product of natural selection, the same as every other form of matter."*

"By tracing the descent of man below the primates, the question of the origin of man was not fully solved. It was merely stated in its correct form, and science could not rest satisfied and regard the Darwinian theories as proven until it had located the transition forms between the common primeval ancestor of men and anthropoid apes, and then followed the line of evolution as far back through the lower animals as human faculties would permit."†

"The quest after the origin of life compelled science to penetrate far beyond so-called living organisms. It led into the inorganic and wiped out the former line of demarcation between organic and inorganic, living and dead matter. It showed that organic life arose through the mechanical evolutions of inorganic life."‡

*Socialist philosophy is positively asserted* by Untermann *to be identical with evolutionary materialism.* He says:

"Every socialist writer of note is a convinced Darwinian and Spencerian, besides being a convinced Marxian. For this reason, the socialist

*Ibid. Sept. 1904. p. 163.
†Ibid. Sept. 1905. p. 156.
‡Ibid. p. 158.

Darwinians are alone able to reason in a consistent materialist monist way."*

Having said that materialistic monism enabled Marx, Engels, and Dietzgen to find a general key for the solution of all the riddles of the universe by means of inductive reasoning from experienced facts; that, by the application of this method, Marx and Engels realized the general evolution of nature and of society by dialectic processes, and Dietzgen produced a theory of understanding which established harmony between the human mind and the universe; he alleges as a proof for the vital truth of dialectic materialism its universal acceptance by the socialists, the united proletarians of the world.†

"*The Coming of Socialism* means the *Coming of Scientific Materialism* and the *Passing of dualistic Theology and Metaphysics.*"‡

Plainly Untermann's materialism lacks neither clearness nor completeness. Nor is it wanting in authority, for as he pre-eminently belongs to the learned men of the socialist party of America, his teachings have the greatest weight and exercise the widest influence.

A. M. Simons professes Marxian materialism in loftier language. He writes in the "Craftsman":

*Ibid. p. 161.
†Ibid. p. 152.
‡Ibid. April 1906. p. 609.

"From the time when homogeneity first took on heterogeneity, through all those endless eons of years of world-building and species-creating, when 'selection' and 'struggle for survival' were molding organic matter into ever more complex and more perfectly adjusted forms, until at last the genus homo stood erect on this earth, then on through those other almost countless centuries during which man was transforming the bough torn from the tree or the stone dug from the earth into the first crude things that could be called tools, on through still other weary lines of centuries in which language and the beginnings of social relations were being painfully worked out, and chipped stone was being polished, to give way to bronze and iron—during all these stretches of time, beside which that related by the historian is but a wink of the eye, the one great pressing problem, social and individual, for each and every organism, whether plant or animal, amœba, fungus, microbe, mammal or man, was how to transform the material environment into forms that would satisfy needs."*

Raphael Buck espouses the same evolutionary materialism:

"The central idea running through that conception of the universe which the discoveries and generalizations of modern science have imposed upon the cultivated thought of the pres-

*Quoted by the Worker. Oct. 14, 1905.

ent day is that of evolution. We now know that nothing in the universe is fixed and stationary. All things are in a state of flux and constant change, and have arrived at their present state by a long-continued process of development. . . . The teeming and varied life upon the globe has risen from humble beginnings and passed through many mutations of form and fortune, ere reaching . . . its present perfection and beauty of adaptation, and proud man himself must see in the *Pithecanthropus Erectus,* or extinct ape-man of Malaysia, the link of kinship that binds him to the rest of the animal kingdom."*

Leonard D. Abbott, a prominent New York socialist, longs for the time when the teachings of Darwin and Marx will find universal acceptance.†

Isador Ladoff with much stress and emphasis marks out materialism as the very essence of socialism, though he is accused, and not without reason, of confusing in his discussions idealistic with materialistic views.‡ To quote from his "Passing of Capitalism":

"Darwin (the grandfather of Charles Darwin), Goethe, Lamarck, Jofroi, St. Iller, Charles Darwin and other modern naturalists established

*Int. Soc. Rev. Sept. 1903. p. 153.

†The People, vol. 9, no. 33. Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 61.

‡Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1901. p. 387.

firmly the theory of evolution, of gradual development of life on earth from the most simple and primitive forms to its highest type, the human race. Mankind is but a part of animal life on earth. Obviously the philosophy of life as advanced by the Darwinian school must find its application in social economics. The last of all sciences, however, to be studied on evolutionary principles appears to be sociology, the science of human society."

"The honor of the first attempt to apply evolutionary methods to the history of men unmistakably belongs to the great founder of the materialistic conception of history, Karl Marx. Without the conception of human society as a product of evolution, critical Socialism would be an impossibility. As a matter of fact, critical Socialism is nothing else but a rational system of philosophy of human life in the light of the theory of evolution. The so-called materialistic conception is to be called more properly the evolutionary conception of history."*

Consistently with these views, Ladoff denies the distinction of soul from the body and asserts that matter is the eternal and ultimate cause of all.† With like consistency he holds the opinion that human society is developed according to the very same laws as the material universe.

*The Passing of Capitalism. pp. 75, 76.
†Ibid. pp. 14, 16, 17.

"Society is governed by the same laws that rule the rest of the organic and inorganic world."*

"Human society is subjected to the same laws of evolution and devolution, development and decay, organization and deorganization, as the rest of the world. All institutions of human society are of a transitory character; they develop, grow, and succeed each other according to certain laws."†

Concerning the existence of God, he points out the agnostic view as the one to be held by the rational socialist.

"The greatest modern scientists have come to the conclusion that neither the existence nor the non-existence of a personal deity can be demonstrated by proofs of our senses. They therefore declared all speculations in favor or against God to be beyond the scope of the human mind and consequently to be futile and purposeless. This honest and candid admission of the limitation of the human mind, called agnosticism, is the proper point of view of all rational socialists to maintain. The real material world around and in us ought to be and is our field of activity."‡

Not to weary the reader, we abstain from further quotations, although still more accumulated evidence might seem desirable for the purpose of

*Ibid. p. 21.
†Ibid. p. 68.
‡Ibid. p. 48.

establishing to what extent unmitigated materialism is accepted by the socialist school. But we shall throw more light on this question in the next chapter when discussing the materialistic conception of history.

## Section II

### *Marxian Materialism Modified and Mitigated*

Unmitigated materialism, though adopted by the orthodox Marxists, is not quite in keeping with the latest phase of modern thought. Contemporary philosophy is monistic and evolutionary in its tendency, inasmuch as it derives all being from one self-evolving principle, immanent in the visible universe, but it disavows the evolution of mind from brute matter just as Marx and Engels abhorred the gross mechanism of materialistic philosophy of the eighteenth century. An attempt, therefore, has been made to alloy materialism with idealism by a return to Kant's critical philosophy. Because of the undeniable difference between the spiritual and the material powers existing in man, and the impossibility of explaining the one by the other, mind is no longer conceived as developed from matter; on the contrary, matter and mind are regarded as parallel, and hence as independent of one another in origin. Yet to save monism, it is maintained that they are not two distinct reali-

ties, but two aspects or two phases of one and the selfsame thing. Contradictory as these assertions seem to be, modern philosophers try to reconcile them. Matter and mind, we are told, are not, as they were formerly supposed to be, substances which underlie the phenomena, as their subjects, but merely syntheses of phenomena, or subjective forms under which they are conceived; matter the form or synthesis of physical, mind the form or synthesis of psychic phenomena as present in our consciousness. There is, consequently, no reality in mind or matter distinct from the phenomena and prior to them as their cause. And the physical and psychic phenomena themselves are not two distinct and opposite worlds. Both are sensations, representations in our consciousness, appearances within ourselves. The physical phenomena, which are called the outer world, are direct sense impressions, making by their vividness the object appear outside us; the psychic phenomena, termed the inner world, are reproductions and associations of the direct sensations made by the functions of the brain. Reflex as well as direct perceptions are manifestations or determinations of a thing in itself, immanent in man as the last and universal cause, which, however, is not attainable by any faculty of ours, but is merely postulated by reason in order to complete the unity of the universe. Thus a new philosophical system, neo-Kantism, is built up, in which materialism, agnosti-

cism, monism, and idealism are combined. It is monistic, because all is traced back in it to one universal cause, the thing in itself, immanent in the world; agnostic, because the thing in itself is absolutely unknowable; idealistic, because it identifies being and thinking, phenomenon and perception. It is nevertheless materialistic, since, according to it, the world, both inner and outer, is identical with our own subjective perceptions, which are but organic acts of our bodily faculties; and the cause by which universal oneness is established is immanent in visible nature and not above or distinct from it, if, indeed, it can be at all conceived as real, after it has been said to be unknowable and unattainable by any mental power.

Some socialist writers have espoused these advanced views and accordingly tried to improve on Marxian materialism. We mention in the first place Belfort Bax. In the last chapter of his "Ethics of Socialism," after having critically examined the idea of the Ultimate Cause and Supreme Being, he arrives at the conclusion that monotheism is intrinsically contradictory and more absurd than polytheism, but that the polytheist is worse than the atheist, whose position is the best of all.* Summing up the reason for this assertion he says:

"The contention of the Antitheist, that the ordering of the cosmos does not display wisdom or

*Ethics of Socialism. London 1902. pp. 201-214.

goodness commensurate with the power visible in it, is perfectly justified from the anthropomorphic standpoint of view which the ordinary Theist occupies. The Theist can not rebut the Antitheist's argument which gives him the alternative of viewing the demiurge as either pre-eminently foolish or pre-eminently wicked."

"Once we are outside of the vicious circle of Theism the case is otherwise. The pagan, although he, too, views the universe anthropomorphically, is not open to the above criticism, since the idea of conscious creation is absent or subordinate with him; and besides, as already observed, his gods are limited each to his own sphere; they form a society or hierarchy and are all subordinated to that special bogie of the Theist, an irresistible and impersonal Fate. Hence the Polytheist might consistently, and without any self-deception, worship his god as perfectly good in intention, even if his acts fell short. Again the Atheist who rejects entirely the notion of a personal demiurge (not, as according to the common and convenient misrepresentation, because he thinks he can *prove* the negative proposition, but because he finds the positive absurd and unsatisfactory as a theory of the universe) is in still better case since he does not read morality into nature at all. He does not postulate like the Theist a benevolent demiurge, nor like the Antitheist a malevolent demiurge. Nature for him is neither moral nor

immoral, but extra-moral. To the Atheist, nature is not, like the works and deeds of men, the product of conscious and willing intelligence, but the outcome of an immanent necessity."*

As the ultimate cause of the external world Bax recognizes the infinite potentiality, the Eternal Becoming which is involved in all experience, but never adequately manifested and never known otherwise than as the chain of modifications of matter in motion.†

To understand this rather abstruse speculation we must bear in mind his conception of soul and matter. The soul is in his opinion nothing but a memory-synthesis, a succession of perceptions, thoughts, and volitions knit together by memory.

"Self-consciousness, *i.e.*, the consciousness of the object called 'myself,' simply means the consciousness of a definite thread of memory associated with a definite material organism or body as its instrument. In other words, the individual consciousness as such, the empirical ego or 'soul' (according as we choose to term it), evinces itself as at basis nothing but a memory-synthesis, that is, as a succession of perceptions, thoughts, and volitions, knit together by memory and conceived by reflection as a concrete object, under the category of 'substance.' The memory-synthesis means primarily the connecting or binding together of a

*Ibid. pp. 213, 214.
†Ibid. pp. 214, 215.

definite quantum of the infinite possible moments of consciousness, actualized under the form of time, as constituting one whole of 'self-reference' in such wise that the past is intuitively connected with the present and both are identified as elements of one single and indivisible experience."

"Philosophical or psychological analysis of personal identity, as given in experience, discloses memory as the essential element therein and hence indicates that the memory-synthesis and the personality are identical."*

From this Bax infers that the doctrine of continuance of the ego or memory-synthesis after death is from a philosophical point of view possible, but that the doctrine of immortality, of never-ending continuance, seems *per se* philosophically untenable.†

The material world, the external object of our experience, is the whole of our sense impressions united into one whole by the means of thought-forms and intuitively postulated as a reality.‡

Both the perception of the outward and the experience of the inward object or self, Bax further maintains, are determinations of consciousness in general existing within us.

"Reflective thought, *i.e.*, philosophy, interprets this intuitive postulate of reality as the determina-

*Ibid. pp. 181, 182.
†Ibid. p. 184.
‡Ibid. p. 190.

tion of Consciousness-in-general. It is this same power of universal consciousness within us which experiences the inward object we call 'self' no less than the manifold objects of the outer world. But in the latter case the universal Power of consciousness (or to use the language of philosophy the Pure Subject) seems itself bounded by the immediacy or thisness of that very synthesis which is its object. Here is an illusion. The universal element in consciousness, the element that perceives the memory-synthesis as object of its immediate experience, just as it also perceives the things of space as objects of its mediate experience, is not limited by any particular synthesis arising in time. If the foregoing line of argument be correct, any given memory-synthesis is merely an accident, merely the transitory form this element assumes. The universal element is the alone abiding. The particular personality, as which it is determined, under certain particular conditions of time and space is as such its mere temporary and local manifestation."

"This universal element in experience, this universal principle of knowledge, constitutes the permanent possibility of consciousness, irrespective of time, and it is this element in consciousness which is the ultimate basis of the whole, which, continually realizing itself anew as memory-synthesis, yet never exhausts itself."

"The universal element in consciousness . . .

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is continually determining itself in countless memories or 'selves,' each of which, however, has its individuality as this 'myself' here and now."*

The universal element in consciousness, identical with infinite potentiality, is, according to Bax, unknowable. He says:

"Below and beyond all actuality, reality, or finitude of things is presupposed the infinite potentiality, the Eternal Becoming involved in all experience, of which concrete consciousness with its *time* is the supreme expression, but which for this very reason can never be adequately manifested in any *particular* or actual consciousness or in any *particular* or actual time. We try to fix the I or subject which we find posited as the core and root of all thinking and knowing, and we find we have merely got an object, a particular memory-synthesis, *i.e.*, a particular body of thoughts or experiences which presupposes an infinity of other thoughts or experiences not expressed in them. The true I is never object, but yet all *object* exists merely in its consciousness, that is, as its determination or *pro tanto* its negation. We try to define or explain the undetermined *nisus,* or Becoming presupposed in all conscious action of the individual, and we find in any given case we have merely got a given determining motive or motives."†

The philosophy advocated in the passages

*Ibid. pp. 190, 191.
†Ibid. pp. 214, 215.

quoted is Fichtean idealism combined with materialism. For the self-conscious, the empirical ego is, in Bax's opinion, nothing but a definite thread of memory associated with a definite material organism or body as its instrument, and the outer world is nothing but the whole of our sense impressions postulated as a reality. The ultimate cause of all being, the infinite potentiality, the Eternal Becoming resolves itself into a chain of matter in motion in the outer world, and into a thread of memory binding together, not spiritual, but organic perceptions in the inner world. Consciousness in general, which is identical with infinite potentiality, evolves and determines itself in time by perceptions of a material and organic nature. It is, therefore, not immaterial and has no existence beyond the material world and our organic or sensuous perceptions. Nay, it can not even exist apart and distinct from them, for it is but a generalization, and generalizations are as such not existences, but abstractions.

Also Emil Vandervelde, the leader of the Belgian socialists, espouses the new idealistic-materialistic idea. Demanding for the evolution of human society ideal forces besides the economic conditions, he explains their mutual relations in the following manner:

"It is true that we can not conceive the nature of pure mind; we can not separate thought from the material substratum. But instead of seeking to

prove either an essential difference or a relation of cause and effect between mind and matter, monism considers the one and the other as two aspects of a single substance. In the same way we do not think that the morality, philosophy and religion of an epoch are independent of the economic conditions present and past. We can not disentangle the social psychic from the social physic. But because the evolution of ideas is indissolubly united with the material evolution, it does not follow that the one is the cause of the other."*

A thorough reconstruction of the philosophical basis of socialism on the basis of neo-Kantism has been attempted by Dr. Ludwig Woltmann in his work: "Der Historische Materialismus." The learned author grants that Marxian socialism as a philosophical system ranks very high and is a ripe intellectual production of our age; still, in his opinion, its foundations need a critical examination. This he thinks to be necessary, not as though Marx himself, whom he regards as no less eminent in philosophy than in economics, had failed in the fundamental theory of socialist science, but because Engels and the Marxists have misinterpreted his ideas. He looks, in fact, on Marx's separation from Hegel as a movement back to Kant. But the downfall of pantheistic idealism does not imply the resuscitation of Kant's philosophy in its integrity. The neo-Kantists, says

*Int. Soc. Rev. Feb. 1904. p. 457.

Dr. Woltmann, rejecting as sophistical Kant's metaphysics of morals, in which he attempts to prove the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, adopt only his critique of man's cognitive faculties.* Now in this part of his philosophy he teaches monism, the evolution of the entire universe from one organism by a natural and necessary process, the descent of man from the brute, the development of intellectual and moral endowments from brutal instincts; all which supposed, it is but consistent that he calls the fully developed brain the organ of thought and of all intellectual activity.†

Matter, according to Kant, if conceived as a reality outside of the mind is an illusion, for it is in truth only the innate form of our external sense-perceptions, and likewise is the soul not a substance, but the form of the internal sense-perceptions. Though widely differing from one another, these two sense-perceptions with their forms belong to the same thinking subject, and may, therefore, well be conceived of as manifestations or phenomena of the same thing in itself, absolutely unattainable by the senses.‡

Above the senses there exists reason, man's supreme yet organic faculty seated in the brain. It, too, is developed by universal evolution, when

*Der Historische Materialismus. Footnote. p. 69.
†Ibid. pp. 19, 85, 89, 276, 296, 343.
‡Ibid. pp. 311, 313.

reaching its ultimate stage in man. Later in origin than the senses, it presupposes their perceptions as the material on which it works; but is in its operations independent of and superior to them. It is this faculty, residing in the higher centers of the brain, that reproduces the sense-perceptions, both internal and external, that reduces them to unity according to innate forms and regulative principles, that forms conceptions and ideas which, far transcending experience, belong to a new order, manifest universal laws and make up the transcendental sciences, philosophy and esthetics. It is by it also that man attains to self-consciousness and knows himself as an end to himself, as free and autonomous, as the author of the moral law, though absolutely subject to it, and conceives of nature as a universal organism teleologically united. In consequence he comes to know the thing in itself under a new aspect as a cause and an end to itself, though he can not comprehend its universality or know it as distinct from himself and the world, because he reaches it only as individualized in his own consciousness.*

A new order of things and of human thoughts might thus seem to have been founded, which, being altogether ideal and rational, is far above the world of experience.

Nevertheless if, as is said, the entire world is evolved from one primeval organism, if even

*Ibid. pp. 46, 47, 275, 313, 318.

man's superior faculties are developed from brutal instincts and his highest activities are nothing but organic functions of the brain, this higher and rational order, notwithstanding its idealistic elements, remains deeply mersed in materialism. In this view we are confirmed by Dr. Woltmann himself, the able and enthusiastic exponent of neo-Kantism. For in the course of his treatise he professes materialistic principles as clearly and unequivocally as ever materialistic philosophers have done. Human life, according to his teaching, is the function of the whole organism, the life of the soul the function of the nervous system. Rational consciousness, the ultimate production of soul-life, is the function of the cortical part of the brain. Self-consciousness is a differential function of consciousness. Hence personality has only relative steadiness and ceases to exist with the decay of the organism, respectively of the brain.*

He moreover plainly asserts that by his return to Kant he does not intend to do away with Marxism, but only to enable its professors, by the critique of its method, to solve the problems of historical materialism with clearer consciousness.†

It is of importance to bear in mind the two forms of evolutionary materialism here described; materialism pure and unmitigated, and materialism tempered with idealistic elements. We shall

*Ibid. pp. 294, 301, 302.
†Ibid. p. 296.

presently see the socialists, on the ground of this difference in materialistic thought, split into two factions opposed to each other not only in theoretical views but also in tactics.

# CHAPTER III

## THE MATERIALISTIC CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

### SECTION I

### *The Materialistic Conception of History as Stated by Marx and Engels*

THE materialistic-dialectic method has been employed by modern thinkers chiefly in two branches of human knowledge, in biology by Charles Darwin, in order to account for the origin of species of living beings, and in history by Marx, in order to explain the evolution of human society. Scientific socialism, therefore, is a materialistic interpretation of the history of mankind. Only as such can it be correctly conceived, and only so understood can its teaching concerning religion and morals be comprehended. We shall first render the general formulas in which the materialistic conception of history was stated by Marx and Engels, and then give the different constructions put on it, which to-day divide socialistic into orthodox Marxists and revisionists.

Engels lays down a very clear and precise formula in his "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific."

"The materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production of the

means to support human life and, next to production, the exchanges of things produced, is the basis of all social structures; that in every society that has appeared in history the manner in which wealth is distributed and society divided into classes or orders is dependent upon what is produced, how it is produced, and how the products are exchanged. From this point of view the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the *philosophy,* but in the *economics* of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place, with which the social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping. From this it also follows that the means of getting rid of the incongruities that have been brought to light must also be present, in a more or less developed condition, within the changed modes of production themselves. These means are not to be invented by deduction from fundamental principles, but are to be discovered in the stubborn facts of the existing system of production."*

*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. pp. 45, 46.

In a footnote to the communist manifesto, Engels remarks that the clause "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles," applies only to *written* history. Accordingly in the preface to the first edition of his "Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" (1884), he completed the formula so as to suit it to all history, written and unwritten. It reads:

"According to the materialistic conception, the decisive element of history is pre-eminently the production and reproduction of life and its material requirements. This implies, on the one hand, the production of the means of existence (food, clothing, shelter, and the necessary tools); on the other hand, the generation of children, the propagation of the species. The social institutions under which the people of a certain historical period or of a certain country are living are dependent on those two forms of production; partly on the development of labor, partly on that of the family. The less labor is developed, and the less abundant the quantity of its production and, therefore, the wealth of society, the more society is seen to be under the dominion of sexual ties. However, under this formation based on sexual ties, the productivity of labor is developed more and more. At the same time, private property and exchange, distinctions of wealth, exploitation of the labor power of others, and, by this agency, the foundation of

class antagonisms, are formed. These new elements of society strive in the course of time to adapt the old state of society to the new conditions, until the impossibility of harmonizing these two at last leads to a complete revolution. The old form of society founded on sexual relations is abolished in the clash with the recently developed social classes. A new society steps into being, crystallized in the state. The units of the latter are no longer sexual, but local groups; a society in which family relations are entirely subordinate to property relations, thereby freely developing those class antagonisms and class struggles that make up the contents of all written history up to the present time."*

But Engels was not the first to expound the materialistic conception of history, though he has stated it most clearly and definitely. What he says in the above quotations was set forth by Karl Marx long before in the communist manifesto and even more extensively, inasmuch as the religious, moral, and philosophical ideas prevailing in society at different times are therein derived also from economic conditions.

We read in Part II as follows:

"Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views and, in one word, man's consciousness changes with every change in the

*The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State. Translated by E. Untermann. Chicago 1902. pp. 9, 10.

conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life? What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of the ruling class. When people speak of ideas that revolutionize society they do but express the fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence. When the ancient world was in its last throes the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the eighteenth century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the way of free competition within the domain of knowledge."

"The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas."

The communist manifesto is a joint production of Marx and Engels, but the leading idea of it, which implies the economic conception of history, belongs to Marx, as Engels confesses in the preface written to it in 1888.

"The 'Manifesto' being our joint production, I consider myself bound to state that the fundamental proposition which forms its nucleus belongs to Marx. That proposition is: that in every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization following from it, form the basis upon which is built and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolution in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—can not attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without at the same time, and once for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions, and class struggles."

"This proposition, which, in my opinion, is destined to do for history what Darwin's theory has done for biology, we both of us had been gradually approaching for some years before 1845. How far I had independently progressed toward it, is best shown by my 'Condition of the Working Class in England.' But when I again met Marx at Brussels in the spring of 1845, he had it ready worked out and put it before me, in terms al-

most as clear as those in which I have stated it here."

The most complete and authoritative statement of the materialistic conception of history from the pen of Marx is that given in the preface of his "Critique of Political Economy" published in 1859. The following is a free translation of it.

"In the social production of their means of subsistence, men enter upon certain necessary relations independent of their will, productive relations (Productionsverhaeltnisse), which correspond to a certain stage of development in their productive forces. The sum total of these relations forms the economic structure of society, the real basis, upon which an ethical and political superstructure is built and to which certain forms of social consciousness correspond. The method of producing their material livelihood determines also the social, political, and intellectual process of life in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their life, but, on the contrary, it is the social life that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with their productive relations, or in other words, with the property relations, under which they have been hitherto exerted. From being forms of development of the productive forces these relations change into shackles which fetter production. Then ensues an epoch of social revolution. With the change of

the economic basis, the whole gigantic superstructure is more or less rapidly overturned. In the study of such revolutions we must always distinguish between the material changes scientifically ascertainable, which take place in the economic conditions, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical, in short, ideological forms, in which mankind becomes conscious of this conflict and fights it out. As little as we judge an individual by what he himself thinks he is, can we judge such a revolutionary epoch by its own consciousness. We must rather seek the explanation of this consciousness in the contradictions of men's material life and in the conflict existing between the social productive forces and the social productive relations."

"A form of society never breaks down until all the productive forces for which it affords room are developed, nor will new and higher productive relations be established in its place, until the material conditions of life necessary to support them have been prepared in the bosom of the old society itself."

"We may in broad outlines mark out the Asiatic, the antique, the feudal and the modern capitalist methods of production as progressive epochs in the economic evolution of society. The productive relations arising out of the modern capitalistic method of production constitute the last antagonistic form of social production, antagonistic not in

the sense of an individual antagonism, but of an antagonism growing out of social conditions of individuals. But the productive forces developing in the bosom of capitalistic society at the same time create the material conditions needed for the solution of this antagonism. This form of society, therefore, brings to a close the evolution antecedent to final human society."

The materialistic conception of history, or as it is sometimes called, historical materialism, formulated in these quotations was later on explained and qualified by Engels in his "Anti-Duehring" and especially in two letters written in 1890 and 1895 respectively and published in "Der Socialistische Akademiker." He acknowledged the necessity of a modification; for speaking both of himself and of Marx, he writes:

"We had to emphasize the *dominating principle* —the economic side of the question—which was not admitted by our opponents. In doing so we did not always find time, place, or opportunity to give due recognition to the *other factors* contributing to the general result."

He distinctly points out the different elements which constitute the economic conditions determining the evolution of society. They are: the manner in which men in a given society produce the means of their subsistence and exchange the goods produced; hence also the technics of production and transportation; furthermore, the geographical

basis on which economic conditions are formed; the relics of preceding stages of economic evolution which come down to later times and are preserved by tradition, and, finally, the external environment of society.

At last he grants that there are many factors which concur in the process of historical or social evolution.

"There are innumerable forces, crossing and recrossing one another, an infinite group of parallelograms of forces. All these result in the historic event."

There are besides the economic, also political, philosophical, religious, literary, and artistic factors. These, however, though they have a relative independence in their sphere of action, are founded on the economic conditions and are ultimately developed from them and dependent on them in their activity. They also react not only on one another, but also on their basis; for, indeed, inventions, discoveries, technical revolutions, laws, and political institutions are the result of intelligence working on matter. But the final outcome of the manifold actions and reactions of all the factors is ultimately determined by the economic factor. The several forces are but the direct and immediate causes; the economic factor is the indirect and ultimate cause; the former are particular and subordinate agencies, the latter is the supreme and universal principle. Hence he arrives at the con-

clusion that among the many forces on which social evolution depends, the economic conditions are the ultimate, supreme, dominating, and decisive factor.* Kautsky renders Engels' thought tersely and precisely in very few words when he says: "Man directs society not as a master of economic conditions, but as their servant."

L. Boudin comprises the meaning of the materialistic conception of history as proposed by Marx in the following sentences:

"The Materialistic Conception of History maintains that the evolution of human society as a whole, and that of all human institutions, is not, as the idealists insisted, the result of the changes in men's *ideas* relative to the society they were living in and its institutions, which changes are brought about by the inherent law of development of the ideas; but that, quite to the contrary, the development of society, including men's ideas of human society and institutions, are the result of the development of the material conditions under which men live; that these conditions are the only ones which have an independent existence and development; that the changes of the material conditions cause the institutions of human society to be changed to suit them; and that the ideas on all subjects relating to man in society, including those of right and wrong between man and man and even

*Woltmann. Historischer Materialismus. pp. 238-251. Introduction to Engels' Feuerbach. A. Lewis. pp. 25-30.

between man and his God, are changed by man in accordance with and because of those changed material conditions of his existence."*

## Section II

### *The Materialistic Conception of History, a Materialistic Theory*

The Marxian interpretation of history by the economic conditions of society is obviously materialistic. There are, however, nowadays socialists who are not willing to grant this without a qualification. They allow that it is materialistic as far as it is given by the employment of the materialistic-dialectic method, but deny that it is a materialistic theory or a system of philosophical materialism. A short reflection will prove this position to be wrong and self-contradictory.

First of all, the dialectic method itself as used by Marx is essentially materialistic. In Chapter I of this Part, we have seen how the Hegelian dialectic was turned *right side up again* by him; how thus inverted it is *reduced to the knowledge of the universal laws of motion,* and *is nothing else than the conscious reflex of the dialectic evolution of the real world,* and again how by it the ideal order has lost its priority and is *henceforth but the material world reflected in the human mind and translated*

*Int. Soc. Rev. June 1905. p. 720.

*into forms of thought.* Such being the trend of the materialistic-dialectic method, its employment evidently installs materialism in possession. Furthermore Marx with Engels recognized in Hegel's inverted dialectic the proper method by which he might build up the science of society on materialistic foundations; a philosophical enterprise which he considered as his special task. Employing this method he discovered in the economic conditions the material cause of social evolution and the material basis of the social and historical sciences.

Marx, then, undoubtedly regarded the interpretation of history by economic conditions as truly materialistic. And such indeed it is. Are the economic conditions of our life, of its production and sustenance, taken prior to all intellectual and ideal factors, not merely physical or material causes? But if the causes which are specified as chiefly and ultimately determining the evolution of society are material, is there not an interpretation of history attempted which is materialistic not only in method but also as a theory? E. Untermann justly infers that the admission of the economic conditions as the last cause of all human evolution materializes the whole human soul-life.

"If the economic conditions shape the thought of men so forcibly as to compel them to a definite line of political action, then it must be shown that the whole human *soul-life* is nothing but a response

to material stimuli, and not only to economic stimuli, but also to all stimuli coming from the social, terrestrial, and cosmic environment."*

With the same logical necessity it must be inferred from the predominance of the economic conditions in the process of social evolution that the entire life of society is nothing but a response to material stimuli. The materialistic conception of history thus materializes all human life, both individual and social. Our proof is corroborated by the fact that according to Marx and Engels the course of history determined by economic conditions is a part of the universal evolution of nature, a natural process governed by blind necessity and not by intellectual direction. What other than material causes could effect such an evolution of society and in such a manner? As Engels says in his "Feuerbach" and repeats in his letter written in 1895 and published in the "Socialistische Akademiker," the course of history is governed by universal inner laws. In the majority of cases the wished-for ends of individuals cross and interfere with each other, are utterly incapable of realization or pursued by the use of ineffectual means. "So the innumerable conflicts of individual wills and individual agents in the realm of history reach a conclusion which is on the whole analogous to that of the realm of nature and is in the average the common resultant of all individual ends and pursuits." As Marx con-

*Int. Soc. Rev. April 1906. p. 590.

ceives social evolution, class-struggles and revolutions must of necessity result from the conflict between the productive forces and coexisting property relations, and out of revolutions must successively rise new forms of social life, until the perfection of final or ideal society will be reached. The necessary development of one form of social life from the other is strikingly brought out by him in the description which he gives of the transition from the bourgeois state to the socialist commonwealth.

"Along the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production which has sprung up and flourished along with and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of the capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."*

*Capital. c. xxxii. English translation. London 1902. pp. 788, 789.

The same thought is developed at full length in the communist manifesto.

The necessity with which the course of history is thought to go on under the influence of the economic conditions is well expressed by an appellation used by Marxists to characterize the materialistic conception of history. They often term it economic determinism. Determinism excludes freedom and implies inevitable necessity. Such necessity, indeed, is intrinsic to determination by economic conditions; for economic conditions, considered as prior to intellectual influence, determine the course of historical events not by cognition or intelligence, but blindly; not consistently with freedom, but by physical necessitation.

To conclude, Marx's materialistic conception of history is an integral part of evolutionary materialism; for it is an application of the general evolutionary principles to human society in particular, just as Darwinism is an application of them to plant and animal life. It is an essential part of materialistic monism, because by it human history is reduced to oneness with the universal world-process. Finally, because its method is materialistic-dialectic, it implies the fundamental principle of philosophical materialism, the priority of matter to thought, of the material world to the ideal and intellectual order.

## Section III

### *Objections against the Materialistic Conception of History*

The materialistic conception of history being a materialistic theory, we must expect that it meets with as much opposition as Marx's materialism itself has met with. Critics and opponents, in fact, have risen against it in no small number in the camp of the revisionists. Let us see what they disapprove of in it, what they object to and condemn, and how they attempt to reconstruct it.

While they grant that economic conditions exercise a prominent influence on the course of history and the development of civilization, they deny that the economic is the sole dominating factor, the supreme and ultimate determinant of social evolution, and that the history of mankind is determined with inevitable economic necessity.

Prominent among the English socialists who oppose the materialistic conception of history is Belfort Bax. His attacks on it appeared in a series of articles published in the "Zeit" (a Viennese weekly) in 1896 and in the "Socialistische Akademiker" in 1897. Instead of a materialistic, he advocates a synthetic conception of history. His interpretation may be summed up in the following propositions.

There are two factors in human history, the one external, the other internal and immanent; the

former consisting in the economic conditions of life, the latter in the creative activity of the mind. Neither of them is the adequate cause of historical development, for the concurrence and mutual reaction of both is required. Still they are not dependent on each other, but are co-ordinate and parallel, each of them having its own sphere of action and its own laws. But in their mutual reaction one will predominate over the other; not always, however, nor everywhere in the same manner or in the same degree, but differently under the different aspects of life and in the different periods of history. In the province of philosophy and mathematics, and partly also in religion and arts, the mind will always be independent of and superior to the external factor. But in the formation of moral conceptions, the economic conditions gain in power in proportion as society progresses, until they reach their greatest influence in the capitalistic period, when they will constitute themselves the end of human life. For their sway depends on the inequality of men in their means of subsistence. When such inequality disappears and the distinction of classes is abolished, their influence on human thought and volition diminishes and at last ceases altogether. This, of course, is to take place only after the establishment of collective ownership and production. Then the predominance of the mind will be absolute in all spheres of human life.

In Germany, E. Bernstein is the leader of the opposition to the Marxian view. The principal literary productions of his in which he sets forth his social theory are "Die Voraussetzungen des Socialismus" (Stuttgart, 1899), and "Zur Geschichte und Theorie des Socialismus" (Berlin, 1901). To sufficiently interpret the history of human society, he requires besides the economic, also political, religious, and ethical factors, *which to a certain extent must be independent.* To his mind, therefore, there is no absolute historical necessity, no absolute control of history by economic factors. Historical materialism will never succeed in doing away with the fact that men themselves make history, that they have brains, and that the disposition of their brains is not so mechanical a matter as to be governed solely by the state of economics. As men progress in mental development, they begin to emancipate themselves from economic necessity. He distinguishes two powerful currents in modern society.

"On the one hand appears the growing insight into the laws of evolution and more especially of economic evolution. On the other hand, we recognize partly as its cause, partly as its result, an increasing ability to direct the economic development. The economic like the physical forces turn from masters into servants in proportion as their nature is understood. Society, in consequence, possesses greater freedom theoretically in regard

to the economic factors than ever heretofore; and it is only a conflict of interests between its elements that prevents the practical realization of this theoretic freedom. However, common, as opposed to private, interests are gaining ground, and to the extent and in the degree that they do, the natural sway of the economic forces ceases. Individuals and nations withdraw more and more of their life from the influence of a necessity which asserts itself without or against their will."*

L. Woltmann, in the work already spoken of, pleads with no less force for the independence of the mental and moral factors, maintaining that the intellectual life of mankind can be explained materialistically neither from the viewpoint of the natural sciences nor from that of economics. The following is the gist of his argument.

Self-consciousness arises from an act of its own kind by which the mind, having become its own object, perceives itself as the cause of the technical operations and, hence, conceives of itself as will. From self-consciousness, which is in its origin independent of economic forces, spring ideals, which, having reference to humanity, transcend not only particular classes and races, but also all particular epochs of time. Man is, moreover, conscious of needs and interests not only of an economic, but also of a spiritual nature. Again, he is conscious of instincts and impulses, the satisfac-

*Voraussetzungen des Socialismus. p. 10.

tion of which is for itself desirable, and whose objects, consisting of religion, morality, philosophy, and art, are above all classes and class-struggles, universal and everlasting. In him there is enthusiasm about truth, right, virtue, humanity,—ideals which, conceived as ends in themselves, inspire him with strength and vigor. Then there is a morality not only of individuals and races, but also of mankind, and there are moral laws obligatory not only for certain classes and certain times, but for all men and all ages, independently of economic utility.

Man is the master of nature by the knowledge of its laws; but he is conscious of guilt, when he has transgressed the moral imperative to which the lower appetite is subject.

History as a science is concerned with the higher and universal interests of the entire human race and especially with its intellectual and moral evolution and, therefore, judges human events by an ideal and universal standard. In face of these facts it is not possible to say with Marx and Engels that economic interests are the ultimate motives of historical actions and the supreme factors in the formation of history; "that in every historical epoch the prevailing mode of production forms the basis upon which is built up and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch, and that, consequently, the whole history of mankind, since the dissolution of tribal society, has been a history of class-struggles,

contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes."

Woltmann, like Bernstein, denies blind economic necessity in the process of social evolution, especially in the transition from capitalistic to socialist production. The bourgeois form of society, in his opinion, will not break down in consequence of concentration of industries and capital, of financial crises and collapses, of ever-increasing poverty and destitution, of reserve armies of laborers and the uprising of the proletariat; for all these causes do not exist to that extent which the Marxists assume. The present social constitution will yield its place to the co-operative commonwealth by moral necessity; because it will finally be understood that our actual social evils can not be remedied otherwise than by the introduction of collective ownership and production.

Finally, he characterizes the materialistic conception of history as intrinsically contradictory. In building up his sociological system, Marx proceeds from necessary principles and ideal truths. In hurling his indignation and his curses against the capitalist exploiters of labor he is moved by the sense of justice and humanity; in planning the framework of a new society, he has at heart the welfare and happiness, economic, social, intellectual, and moral, of the whole human race. But theoretically he rejects all eternal truths and all ideal universal interests. Again the Marxists,

adopting the materialistic conception of history, maintain that on the economic basis the human race has advanced with blind necessity from one stage of evolution to the other, from savagery and barbarism to civilization, from the slavery and republicanism of Greece and Rome to the feudalism of the Middle Ages, and from this to the industrialism of the modern States, and will at last advance from the capitalistic to the co-operative society. But this new condition of things once being reached, just the reverse will take place. Then man will rule over nature with perfect freedom and control his own evolution as master and creator.

Plainly this interpretation of history implies an intrinsic contradiction in man's nature and a reversion of the necessary law of evolution which up to the twentieth century has held universal sway.

From the contradictions in which the materialistic conception of history is involved, it has been inferred that Marx has been misinterpreted by his followers, or later on has essentially changed its original form. But neither inference is justified. The contradictions are inherent in his own statement and in his commentary on it, and not merely in the interpretations of others. Nor has he ever given up historical materialism. He has nowhere laid another foundation for his materialistic system of historical or social science, or given another materialistic interpretation of social evolution than

by economic conditions. It is always the economic basis that is supreme and ultimate to his mind; it is always to this that he retraces the origin of classes and the existing order of society as also the rise of new phases in civilization and of new forms of social life. That he commits himself to contradictions, shows, indeed, the logical untenableness of his theory, but it does not prove that he was also aware of his inconsistencies, and, therefore, changed or gave up his views. Has not Hegel also contradicted himself, and must he therefore be considered as a realist? Do not materialists of all categories, agnostics and atheists, implicate themselves in inconsistencies? Are they on that account idealists or theists?

It can not be denied that the objections made by Bernstein and Woltmann against historical materialism are of great strength. They show vulnerable points in the Marxian theory, and it is not apparent how they can be answered by consistent Marxists. From this, however, it does not follow that the objectors are fundamentally in a better plight. To explain the origin and working of the higher faculties in man, and the pursuit by them of ideal and universal ends, they resort to neo-Kantism as their philosophical basis. But as we showed above, this latest of the modern philosophical systems is at the bottom not free from materialism, but rather is deeply mersed in it. The neo-Kantians deny the existence of God, the spiritu-

ality and immortality of the soul, nay, the very existence of a soul distinct from the body, of faculties not inherent in the human organism, and of moral tendencies not developed from animal instincts. They leave for religion as worship of a personal deity, and for morality as submission to a divine law, just as little room as the grossest materialists do. Religion is to them nothing but an esthetic feeling, and morality but obedience to the law enacted by human reason itself as the supreme authority.

E. Bernstein is joined in his attacks on the materialistic conception of history not only by L. Woltmann, but also by several other writers of ability, such as Th. G. Masaryk, Paul Barth, Rudolph Wenkstern, Werner Sombart, Paul Weisengruen, Tugaw Baranowsky, and Jean Jaurès. But on the other hand, the number of faithful Marxists who have defended and still defend the materialistic conception of history is not small. We mention in particular W. Liebknecht, who died in 1900, A. Bebel, Karl Kautsky, at present the strongest and staunchest champion of Marxism, E. Ferri, A. Loria, A. Labriola, P. Lafargue, and G. Deville.

The socialist body is thus split up into two factions, the one exclusively materialistic, the other leaning to idealism. The split is deep, reaching down to the very foundations of socialism, and broad, entailing differences also in party tactics.

For if over and above the economic causes ideal and moral factors are necessary, and if economic determination is denied in the course of history, and man's rule over nature and self-determining power is acknowledged; then the class-struggle resulting from the economic interests loses in importance and effectiveness, the social evils may be remedied by the influence of higher motives and interests than those regarding production and reproduction of material life, and universal peace and happiness may finally be attained in a peaceful manner by reforms and concessions, and not by the revolutionary uprising of the proletariat. The Bernsteinian party, therefore, is revisionary and has, in fact, for some years asked for a change of the program of the German social democracy not only in its practical, but also in its theoretical paragraphs. The party headed by Bebel and Kautsky, on the contrary, sticks to the Marxian teachings and tactics, remaining thoroughly materialistic in theory and revolutionary in practice. Wherefore its members are appropriately called orthodox Marxists.

These facts being established, we understand to what extent the materialistic conception of history is espoused or rejected by modern socialists. The revolutionary wing, as we have seen before, nowadays prevails over the revisionary and reformatory, in power and in numbers; its principles are professed in meetings and congresses by

the socialist body as a whole. But revolutionists are Marxists and regard the profession of the Marxian doctrine as their distinctive character. They espouse in particular his materialistic conception of history and base on it the principles they avow and the practical measures they advocate. They do so not only in their press, but also solemnly and officially in their programs and platforms, those very documents which were approved and adopted by the immense majority of the socialists assembled in convention. We shall make good our statement by an analysis of the programs.

## Section IV

### *The Materialistic Conception of History Embodied in Socialist Programs*

It is true, the programs issued by socialist conventions are not expositions of scientific theories, but mere professions of the principles admitted in common and of practical demands arising from them. But it will usually not be difficult to see on what ultimate basis the admitted principles are resting. And if a certain theory is found to be the foundation of the views set forth in the program of a party, it must undoubtedly be considered as embodied in that program and professed by that party.

First of all the Erfurt program written by Karl

Kautsky rests altogether on the materialistic conception of history as set forth by Marx and Engels. As the determining factor in historical evolution this program marks out economic conditions and economic interests, and these exclusively. The economical development of society, so it states, necessarily leads to the destruction of small industries, transforms the laborer into a penniless proletarian, converts the productive means into the property of a comparatively small number of capitalists and landowners, creates monopolies of capital and vast industrial organizations possessing themselves of all the advantages inherent in the increased productiveness of human labor, and entails on the ever-growing proletariat an increasing uncertainty of existence, increasing oppression, exploitation, servitude, and degradation. Hence between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the oppressor and the oppressed, a conflict arises, which becomes more and more violent until it results at last in a revolution, by which the laboring class and with it the whole human race will be emancipated. The sole cause of all these evils is private property in the means of production and the only remedy for them is the socialization of property and production. At the same time the entire process of the succeeding changes, the transition from one stage of development to the other, and in particular the transformation of capitalistic into socialized production are throughout characterized as

being of inevitable necessity. But economic conditions, conceived as the determining factor, and inevitable necessity, looked upon as the law of social evolution, are the two essential features of the materialistic conception of history as set forth by Marx.

If we compare the Erfurt program with the communist manifesto, we find at once that the former is the reproduction of the proposition which, as Engels says, forms the nucleus of the latter, and is nothing else than a statement of the materialistic conception. We have quoted the famous proposition above in Section I and refer the reader to it. Hence we may understand why the Erfurt program is at once the target of the fiercest objections on the part of the revisionist and the creed loudly professed and warmly defended by the revolutionists.

The Austrian socialist program finds the cause of the actual social evils, economic dependence, political oppression, and intellectual decadence, in "that all-powerful fact which shapes and dominates the present state of society, the fact that the means of production are monopolized in the hands of a few proprietors." Conversely, it points out as the only remedy of all evils the abolition of private property and the introduction of co-operative production based on common ownership, which is to be brought about by the struggle of the organized proletariat.

"The more the ranks of the proletariat are swelled by the development of capitalism, the more also the former is forced and also enabled to take up the struggle against the latter. More and more the dislodgment of private production renders private property unnecessary and even harmful, whilst in the meantime the necessary intellectual and material prerequisites for new forms of co-operative production based on common ownership in the means of production are evolving. At the same time the proletariat becomes conscious of its duty to foster and to hasten this development. It recognizes that the transfer of the means of production into common ownership by the people at large is the goal. Only the proletariat, conscious of the existence of a class and organized for the combat, can be the promoter of this necessary development."*

The economic conditions or the mode of production giving rise to the present as well as the future structures of society, the latter springing from the former by an antagonism of classes, the organized proletariat carrying on the struggle of destruction against the possessing class, the co-operative commonwealth resulting as the ultimate stage of society, are all elements of the materialistic conception of history as stated by Marx and Engels.

The American platforms, we know from a former chapter, are all revolutionary. But they

*Socialism. V. Cathrein. pp. 109, 110.

are such, because historical materialism is at their root, just as it is at the root of the Erfurt program. The very words of the latter are repeated in the Indianapolis platform of the Socialist Party.

"Private ownership of the means of production and distribution is responsible for the ever-increasing uncertainty of livelihood and the poverty and misery of the working class, and it divides society into two hostile classes. . . . The possession of the means of livelihood give to the capitalists the control of the government, the press, the pulpit and the schools, and enables them to reduce the working men to a state of intellectual, physical, and social inferiority, political subservience, and virtual slavery. The economic interests of the capitalist class dominate our entire social system."

"But the same economic causes which develop capitalism are leading to socialism, which will abolish both the capitalist class and the class of wage-workers. And the active force in bringing about this new and higher order is the working class."

The Chicago platform of 1904, written by G. D. Herron, though said to be freer, more original and independent than that of Indianapolis, still in an outspoken manner reasserts the fundamental principles adhered to before by the socialists. It adopts no idealistic elements, marks out no other causes of social evolution than the existing property relations, economic production, technical development and economic interests, describes its

course as a necessary world process, characterizes its successive stages as class divisions and class-struggles, and its final outcome as the emancipation of the proletariat in the future commonwealth.

As evidence we quote the following passages:

"The private ownership in the means of employment grounds society in an economic slavery, which renders intellectual and political tyranny inevitable."

"The socialist movement owes its birth and growth to that economic development or world process which is rapidly separating a working or producing class from a possessing or capitalist class."

"This class-struggle is due to private ownership of the means of employment or the tools of production. Wherever and whenever man owned his own land and tools and by them produced only the things which he used, economic independence was possible. But production has ceased to be individual. Practically everything is made or done by many men working together for the same end. But this co-operation in production is not for the direct use of the things made by the workers who make them, but for the profit of the owners of the tools and means of production; and to this is due the present division of society into classes; and from it have sprung all the miseries, inharmonies, and contradictions of our civilization."

"Between those two classes there can be no pos-

sible compromise or identity of interests any more than there can be peace in the midst of war, or light in the midst of darkness. A society based on this class division carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Such a society is founded in fundamental injustice. There can be no possible basis for social peace, for individual freedom, for mental and moral harmony except in the conscious and complete triumph of the working class as the only class that has the right or power to be."

"The socialist program is not a theory imposed upon society for its acceptance or rejection. It is but the interpretation of what is sooner or later inevitable."

When read, each for itself, the above-quoted platforms appear at first sight so little Marxian or materialistic, that they might be accepted by any one dissatisfied with the present economic conditions of society. For undoubtedly there is an immense deal of misery on the part of the working classes, with ever-increasing wealth on the part of capitalists; and there is an opposition between classes and a necessity of changes in our economic system. But if we compare one program with another and all of them with the communist manifesto and with the above-quoted statements of Marx and Engels, we recognize them at once as repetitions of the materialistic conception of history as given in its general outlines. They employ its terms and expressions and openly or covertly, expressly or by

insinuation, repeat all the ideas and reassert all the principles maintained in it. And what is most decidedly Marxian and materialistic, they attribute all social disorder and all evils connected with our present civilization to the property relations alone as their ultimate cause, require a complete overthrow of the actual social order and the rebuilding of society on a new economic basis as the only source of universal happiness, peace, and contentment, and regard social evolution, and especially the coming of the new commonwealth, as inevitably predetermined, because a part of the necessary universal world-process.

Their adoption by those who grasp their real meaning must be regarded as an open profession of the Marxian materialistic conception of history.

## Section V

### *The Materialistic Conception in American Socialist Literature*

Programs are adopted by a party as a body and not by its members individually. Hence they do not necessarily reflect the latter's personal views and opinions. So, too, it may be said that a socialist platform expresses the attitude held by a given socialist party as a whole, but not the attitude assumed by individual socialists toward historical materialism. We need, therefore, over and above

the platforms, yet another standard by which we may judge of the personal convictions of socialists respecting this subject.

As such a standard we justly consider the literature read and studied by the socialists. For books universally read not only express the views of their writers, but give us also an insight into the minds of the readers, because the principles they expound and inculcate can not fail to be imbibed little by little so as to form convictions.

We can not here speak of the socialist literature of the whole world, but must confine ourselves to that of America; though we shall find the latter to be the echo of the former. Let us first turn to the translations of books written by foreign authors, which are spread in the United States as standard works on socialism.

First among them rank the writings of Marx and Engels; and justly indeed, for they are the authentic and original sources of socialist philosophy, and contain the completest statement of historical materialism.

Bebel's "Woman under Socialism," which was translated by Daniel De Leon, and circulates among American socialists, is throughout a materialistic interpretation of history, applied in detail to religion, morals, and politics, to the family and the State.

Special attention is due to the works of E. Ferri, A. Loria and A. Labriola, who, having under-

taken the explanation of the materialistic conception of history as their special task, are pre-eminently recommended as exponents of socialist philosophy.

Enrico Ferri thus comments on the Marxian interpretation of social evolution:

"The ideas by which the genius of Karl Marx completed in the domain of social economy the revolution effected by science are three:

"I allude, first, to the idea expressed by Marx, as long ago as 1859, in his 'Critique de l'economie politique,' that the economic phenomena form the foundation and the determining conditions of all other human or social manifestations, and that, consequently, ethics, law, and politics are only derivative phenomena determined by the economic factor, in accordance with the conditions of each particular people in every phase and under all climatic conditions."

Ferri admits, however, the modifications added by Engels in his letters of 1890 and 1895.

"One idea still appears to me necessary to complete this Marxian theory. . . . It is indeed necessary to rid this impregnable theory of that species of narrow dogmatism with which it is clothed in Marx and still more in Loria."

"It is perfectly true that every phenomenon, as every institution—moral, juridical, or political—is simply the result of the economic phenomena and conditions of the transitory physical and historical

environment. But, as a consequence of that law of natural causality which tells us that every effect is always the resultant of numerous concurrent causes and not of one cause alone, and that every effect becomes in its turn a cause of other phenomena, it is necessary to amend and complete the too rigid form that has been given to this true idea."

"Just as all the psychical manifestations of the individual are the resultant of the organic conditions (temperament) and of the environment in which he lives, in the same way, all the social manifestations—moral, juridical, or political—of a people are the resultant of their organic conditions (race) and of the environment, and these are the determining causes of the given economic organization which is the physical basis of life."

"In their turn, the individual psychical conditions become causes and effect, although with less power, the individual organic conditions and the issue of the struggle for life. In the same way, the moral, juridical, and political institutions from effects become causes (there is, in fact, for modern science no *substantial* difference between cause and effect, except that the effect is always the latter of two related phenomena, and the cause always the former) and react in their turn, although with less efficacy, on the economic conditions."

"This law is truly the most scientific and the most prolific sociological theory that has ever been

discovered by the genius of man. It furnishes, as I have already remarked, a scientific physiological experiential explanation of social history in the most magnificent dramas as well as of personal history in its most trivial episodes . . . an explanation in perfect harmony with the entire trend, which has been described as materialistic, of modern scientific thought."*

Ferri's is, indeed, a clear exposition of the materialistic conception of history, and it has the special merit that it brings out the materialistic nature of this theory to full evidence.

The works of Loria and Labriola are elaborated treatises on the materialistic conception of history in its genuine form. Both have been translated into English with the special purpose to enlighten the American public on this subject. Loria's work shows its purport on its front, for it bears the title "The Economic Foundations of Society" and the headings of its divisions read: "The Economic Constitution of Society," "The Economic Foundations of Morality," "The Economic Foundations of Law," "The Economic Foundations of Politics," "The Economic Basis of Sociology."

The following is the general statement of the materialistic conception of history from the pen of A. Labriola:

"Granted the conditions of the development of labor and the instruments appropriated to it, the

*Socialism and Modern Science. pp. 159-163.

economic structure of society, that is to say, the form of production of the immediate means of life, determines, on an artificial field, in *the first place and directly,* all the rest of the practical activity of those associated, and the variation of this activity in the *processus* which we call history, that is to say, the formation, the frictions, the struggles, and the erosions of the classes; the corresponding regulations relative to law and morality; and the reasons and modes of subordination of men toward men and the corresponding exercise of dominion and authority; in fine, that which gives birth to the State and that which constitutes it. It determines, in *the second place,* the tendency and in great part, *in an indirect fashion,* the objects of imagination and of thought in the production of art, religion, and science."

"It is the social classes, in so far as they consist in differentiations of interests, which unfold in different ways and in forms of opposition (whence come the friction, the movement, the process and the progress), which have been the factors—if it was ever necessary to employ this expression—the real, proper, and positive factors of history, from the disappearance of primitive communism until to-day."*

"If it is true in effect that history rests, before all else, upon the development of technique, that is

*Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History. Translated by Charles H. Kerr. Chicago 1904. pp. 201, 202.

to say, if it is true that the successive discovery of tools gives rise to the successive distributions of labor, and therewith to the inequalities whose sum total, more or less stable, forms the social organism, it is equally true that the discovery of those instruments is at once the cause and the effect of these conditions and of those forms of the inner life to which, isolating them by psychological abstraction, we give the name of imagination, intellect, reason, thought, etc. By producing successively the different social environment, that is to say, the successive artificial foundations, man has produced himself, and in this consists the serious kernel, the concrete reason, the positive foundation of that which by various fantastic combinations and by a varied logical architecture has suggested to the idealogists the notion of the progress of the human mind."*

In Labriola's opinion the materialistic conception of history is the height of modern science, which robs human thought of its theological and metaphysical hypotheses, the culminating point in the new tendency of historical investigation of the determining conditions and determined effects, the solution of all doubts and all uncertainties, which accompany the other forms of philosophizing upon human affairs, and the beginning of their integral interpretations.†

*Ibid. p. 121.
†Ibid. p. 156.

H. M. Hyndman, the leader of the English Social Democratic Federation, accepts historical materialism, when he, in Johnson's Encyclopedia, characterizes the growth of human society as an economic development, the succeeding stages of which follow one another with inevitable necessity. To quote:

"Modern scientific socialism essays to give an intelligible explanation of the growth of human society and to show that as each step in the long course of development from the institution of private property, through chattel slavery, serfdom, and wagedom, was inevitable, so the next step from capitalism to socialism is also inevitable."

Let us now turn to the native American literature, to show how the materialistic conception of history is not only correctly interpreted and fondly embraced by the socialist leaders, but also effectively inculcated on the socialist ranks.

A. M. Simons, formerly editor of the "International Socialist Review," Chicago, is very positive in maintaining historical materialism as the fundamental tenet of socialism. In his pamphlet, the "Philosophy of Socialism," he writes:

"Socialism is the philosophy of social development that treats of the great economic laws, according to the working of which each of these stages of society must naturally be developed from its predecessors. . . . The basis of socialism in this sense is found in what is sometimes called 'the

materialistic conception of history' or 'economic determinism.' The foundation of this conception was stated as follows in the preface to the famous communist manifesto," etc.*

Still more explicit is the statement which the same writer makes in an article of his periodical, June 1904, where he says:

"The philosophy of socialism, as generally accepted by the socialist parties of the world at the present time, takes as its fundamental hypothesis what has been variously called the materialistic interpretation of history, historic materialism, or economic determinism. This doctrine is stated as follows in the communist manifesto: 'In every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production, etc.' . . . It is maintained that the form in which production is carried on in any society constitutes the fundamental fact which determines all other social institutions."

After having given this definition of the materialistic conception of history, he attempts to interpret by it the principal epochs of history from the introduction of private property down to the age of capitalistic industrialism and the rise of the co-operative commonwealth. He says in part:

"Since the appearance of the institution of private property in the instruments by which wealth is produced and distributed, society has necessarily been divided into two classes according as their

*Philosophy of Socialism. p. 3.

members own or do not own these essentials for the production of wealth. The struggle of these classes for power constitutes a large portion of the history of modern times.

"As an ideal, as a social stage, it (socialism) presupposes the capitalistic system, since it alone can prepare the way for socialism. This future system, or ideal, is in no sense of the word a scheme whose adoption is asked for by socialists. It is simply the next logical stage in social evolution."*

Ernest Untermann, no less prominent as a socialist author and intellectual leader, develops the idea of historic materialism in the following manner:

"Our conception of historical materialism is indeed, as Mr. Franklin understands, in its application to social evolution, a part of the philosophy of monism in general. According to our conceptions, men, the products of the evolution of the elements, are compelled to produce food, clothing, and shelter. In so doing they produce tools and by their help modify their mode of production, the nature of food, clothing, and shelter, their environment, and their own nature, including the sum of those physical activities known by the name of mind, or soul. For several thousand years, the social environment of man, and thus his nature, has been modified by the existence and the development of economic classes with antagonistic inter-

*Int. Soc. Rev. June 1904. pp. 721, 724.

ests. Further essential changes in human nature will only follow when these class distinctions are eliminated from human environment. And this elimination will inevitably follow as the outgrowth of economic and political class-struggles. These class-struggles can not be abolished by any philosophical, religious, or moral recipes. They can be abolished by no scheme grown in the individual brain of any single thinker. Their abolition must and will be the outcome of the entire human development. So long as human society lives in two different social environments, it is futile to brew ideological remedies which are supposed to apply to all of society regardless of class environment. Each class can only be moral and philosophical according to its historical condition. All other morality and philosophy has only a paper life. Hence each class must become conscious of its historical place and function, and use its strength, its enthusiasm, its ideologies for the evolutionary development of its own historical function. The socialist party thus becomes the historical product of a definite stage of human and in a wider sense of cosmic development. It does not owe its existence to one thinker, but to the fact that one or more thinkers are compelled by their environment to enunciate certain thoughts, which correspond to the environment of a certain class. To attempt to think anything else would mean to think something which finds no response in the minds of those who are

compelled by their historical condition to act in a certain way. For this reason, bourgeois thinkers have no message for the class-conscious proletariat."*

This statement of the materialistic conception of history is perfectly clear. It is impossible to put an idealistic construction on it, notwithstanding the fact that E. Untermann, in an earlier article written for the "International Socialist Review,"† insists on the necessity of an intellectual factor in social evolution. For the intellectual factor must be secondary and dependent, the economic factor supreme and ultimately decisive; since, as the author holds, the mind itself is nothing but the sum total of physical activities, is developed by the invention of the tools of production, and hence does not determine and control the historical development, but is itself determined by the historical conditions.

Let us quote also from George D. Herron, who nowadays poses as an intellectual leader and the spiritual adviser of the socialists:

"Socialism begins with this—that the history of the world has been economic. The world's sentiments and religions, its laws and morals, its arts and literatures, are all rooted in the struggle between classes for the control of the food supply. Moses and Jesus, Wyclif and Mazzini, Marx and

*Int. Soc. Rev. Dec. 1904. pp. 359, 360.
†Ibid. April 1904. p. 629.

Millet, are products of the stress and injustice of intensified economic conditions. War is but a final mode of economic competition. Religions, in their first and purest expressions, are all economic revolts, appeals, and protests against the ownership of souls involved in economic ownership."*

"Up to the present time, economic conditions have been the compelling motives of great historic changes, or of the lack of changes. All real revolts, in their last analysis, have been motived by intolerable economic conditions, and wars of conquest, however disguised, have been wars of theft, the predatory expeditions of economic fight."†

A no less staunch defender of economic determinism is Rob. Rives La Monte in his latest book, "Socialism, Positive and Negative" (1907).

Isador Ladoff's declaration for the materialistic conception of history is quite sensational.

"Before we try to investigate how far, if at all, socialism preaches, or is conducive to a materialistic philosophy of life and consequently to unethical conduct, it seems expedient to find out whether socialism is guilty of expounding a materialistic philosophy of history. Is this a just accusation against socialism? I answer to that question socialism must step forward before the tribunal of

*Metropolitan Magazine. "There Cannot Be Any Reconciliation Between Capital and Labor." The Appeal to Reason. May 16, 1903. Quoted by D. Goldstein, Socialism. p. 9.

†From Revolution to Revolution. New York 1903. p. 14.

its judges and proclaim 'Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!' Yes, socialism did it through the agency of its foremost and most brilliant champion—Karl Marx."*

Ladoff might nevertheless seem to lean toward the idealistic view, when he adds that Marx and Engels were not led, in their researches and political activity, merely by economic considerations, but by love for the human race and by higher ethical ideals, or when he maintains that rationalistic modern socialism is based not exclusively on certain economic maxims and theories, but on the broad foundation of modern science and thought.†

Consistently with his own teaching, Ladoff can not mean by these remarks to go over to the neo-Kantian school. For, as he maintains in other parts of his book, modern science, on which socialism is based, is *materialistic* monism; the mind with its ideals is not parallel to or independent of matter, but identical with it or the highest quality of it, and society is subject to the same laws of evolution as the rest of the organic world.

Austin Lewis, in a criticism of Professor Seligman's work "The Economic Interpretation of History," makes the following remarks:

"Such philosophy of human life and society as Marx holds is founded, without question, on the economic interpretation of history, and hence it is

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 62. Also pp. 18, 68.
†Ibid. p. 39.

upon this that socialism in the last analysis depends."

"It is almost inconceivable how he (Professor Seligman) could have so misunderstood the significance of the socialist propaganda. He could hardly have read a socialist paper of standing in any language without being convinced that the whole propaganda is based upon the economic interpretation of history, and not upon any particular economic doctrine or ethical scheme of reform."

"Socialism on its active side is the practical recognition of the truth of the economic interpretation and the class struggle. Socialism as an objective ultimate, and even so the term is loosely employed, is merely the victory of the proletariat in the class struggle—nothing more, nothing less—if we are to accept the teachings of its recognized exponents, rather than be misled by the clamor of the unauthorized speaker and pamphleteer."*

What Austin Lewis said of socialist literature in general, Z. C. Ferris affirms of the American socialist literature in particular. When he had published in the "International Socialist Review," November, 1902, an article under the caption "The Theological Dogma of a Cause World," in which he disapproved of the materialistic conception of history, May Wood Simons wrote a paper for the same Review (March, 1903) in defense of

*Int. Soc. Rev. May 1903. pp. 669, 672, 673.

the materialistic interpretation of history. Now this very paper was afterward styled by Ferris "a most lucid presentation of the doctrine as it is understood and taught by socialists in this country, from the pen of one of our ablest teachers."*

The "International Socialist Review" contains a long series of articles on Marxism by L. Boudin, beginning with May, 1905; the materialistic conception of history as proposed by Marx is set forth and advocated in particular in the issues of the following June and July. Upon the whole, this periodical is throughout devoted to the explanation and defense of Marxism and of historic materialism. This is the usual trend of its articles. If occasionally a paper of the opposite tendency is accepted, it is promptly refuted or editorially disapproved.

To sum up, the American socialist literature is, with regard to interpretation of history, throughout Marxian. The writings of European revisionists are not set in circulation with the exception of those of Sombart and Bax. The former, however, expounds revisionary views only incidentally in his "Socialism and the Social Movement in the Nineteenth Century." Bax, though a neo-Kantian, agrees with the Marxists in so far as he maintains that morality and religion, conceived as worship of a personal deity, rest on the economic basis.

The most active socialist publishing house in

*Int. Soc. Rev. May 1903. p. 675.

America is that of Chas. H. Kerr & Co., in Chicago. Its work may be understood from the pamphlet, "What to Read on Socialism," written by Mr. Kerr himself. This contains a catalogue of the socialist books published, with short criticisms. As appears from them, only few of the books expound socialism from an economic point of view; by far the majority are atheistical, evolutionary, and materialistic treatises. In an introduction premised to the catalogue the view with which the pamphlet was written is stated in the following words:

"The object of this book is to give a brief summary of the ideas accepted by the Socialist Party of America, in common with the international socialist movement of the entire world, and to direct readers to the best literature that is within the reach of those wishing to study Socialism."*

These very significant words are followed by a popular explanation of the materialistic conception of history, with the statement in the opening sentence that this conception is the principle underlying the whole literature of international socialism.

Mr. Kerr's pamphlet is a striking proof that the socialist literature in America as well as in Europe is permeated with evolutionary materialism, historical materialism included.

*What to Read on Socialism. Charles H. Kerr. Nov. 1906. p. 3.

## Section VI

### *Bearings of the Materialistic Conception of History*

Before closing our discussions we may with propriety call attention to the bearings which economic determinism has on the entire system of socialist philosophy.

From the conclusions arrived at we know the materialistic conception of history is not merely a dialectic method, but a truly materialistic theory; it altogether rests on philosophical materialism, and is an integral part of Marx's materialistic monism and evolutionism. As such it denies any ruling of divine Providence in the history of mankind and any law of a higher power above man and distinct from nature, denies all eternal and unchangeable laws of morality, all eternal and necessary truths, all principles not deduced from experience, denies in man himself any faculty or function not inherent in his organism, and developed from it by material agencies.

Furthermore, the materialistic conception of history is the central thing, the very essence of socialist philosophy in its specific acceptation. For it is the application of the general principles of evolutionary materialism to human society, the materialistic treatment of the historical sciences, or the building up of them on materialistic foundations,

the explanation of the course of history by merely material causes as its ultimate factor. Hence Engels himself has said that with it socialism became a science. As such a system of social philosophy it derives science and arts, laws and society, from the economic conditions, regarding them as ultimate causes not subject to a higher providence and direction, as factors which determine the history of mankind with blind necessity in accordance with the laws that govern the evolution of the cosmos.

On this position, which is the very essence of Marxian philosophy, all other socialist teachings are resting as on their foundation. In this sense we have heard the socialist authors affirm again and again that the materialistic conception of history is the foundation of socialism. E. Untermann shows in brief the order in which the different tenets of the socialist theory flow from it with logical necessity. He writes:

"Once that Marx had recognized that 'the mode of production of the material requirements determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual life,' and that the transformation of the mode of production was the cause of social revolution, the theory of the class struggles was the inevitable corollary. And in order to find the compelling motive of the productive process, Marx analyzed this process, found that capitalist production was carried on solely for the sake of profit,

and that this profit consisted overwhelmingly of surplus products, stolen from the laborer in the process of production. Therefore the interests of the laborer and the capitalists are diametrically opposed, therefore the class struggle of the proletariat against the capitalist class, therefore a political revolution as the result of the industrial revolution, therefore proletarian thought antagonistic to bourgeois thought."*

We may add that the entire socialist teaching concerning morals and religion is likewise deduced from the materialistic conception of history as the supreme datum, as we shall see in all the following chapters. Such being the bearings of the materialistic conception of history, such the teachings on which it is founded, of which it is directly made up and which it contains by implication, we may with good reason assert that with it socialism has become a complete system of evolutionary materialism. In saying so we are supported by no less authority than that of L. Woltmann, who writes:

"Marxism, as a conception of the world, is, in its broadest outlines, the most complete system of materialism. It contains:

"1. Dialectic materialism, which discusses the relation between thinking and being according to the critical theory of cognition.

"2. Philosophical materialism, which discusses

*Int. Soc. Rev. April 1906. p. 590.

the problem of relation between mind and matter in the light of modern natural sciences.

"3. Biological materialism, which is the theory of natural evolution in accordance with Darwin.

"4. Geographical materialism, which demonstrates that the historical development of human civilization was dependent on the formation of the surface of the earth and the physical environment of society.

"5. Economic materialism, which shows the influence exercised on social and intellectual evolution by the economic conditions, the productive forces, and the state of technics. Geographical and economic materialism constitute the materialistic interpretation in its strict acceptation.

"6. Ethical materialism, which, radically breaking with the world beyond taught by religion, recognizes no ends and no powers in this life and in history but those of the material world."*

*Der Historische Materialismus. p. 6.

# CHAPTER IV

## SOCIALISM HOSTILE TO RELIGION

### SECTION I

### *Socialism Disowns Religion*

HAVING reached the conclusion that socialism is a materialistic interpretation of the history of mankind and of civilization in all its different aspects, we are now fully prepared to enter upon the primary subject of our treatise, the socialist attitude toward religion. As all preliminary questions have been solved, the data from which we are to proceed ascertained, the principles on which our conclusions must rest laid down, our inquiry will not be attended with any remarkable difficulties.

Materialism is as essentially irreligious as theism is religious. Materialism is atheistical. But the existence of a personal God being denied, no religion in the proper sense remains possible; for religion is submission to the Deity, to Him who is the Creator, the Lord, and Ultimate End of man.

Socialism being a materialistic system of philosophy must consistently foreclose any form of religion conceived as divine worship.

The socialists are not unwilling at all to confess their godlessness and irreligiousness. Dietzgen in

his second sermon on "The Religion of Social Democracy" says:

"If religion consists in the belief in supernatural beings and forces, in the belief in gods and spirits, then social democracy has no religion."* . . .

Bebel, the present leader of the German socialists, declared in the Reichstag session of December 31, 1881:

"In politics we profess republicanism, in economics socialism, in religion atheism."

Belfort Bax very clearly defines the socialist attitude toward religion in general in the following passages:

"In what sense socialism is not religious will now be clear. It utterly despises the other world with all its stage properties, that is, the present objects of religion."

"In what sense it is not irreligious will be also, I think, tolerably clear. It brings back religion from heaven to earth, which was its original place. It looks beyond the present individual life, not indeed to another life, to another world, but to another higher social life."†

"As the religion of slave industry was Paganism; as the religion of serfage was Catholic Christianity, or Sacerdotalism; as the religion of Capitalism is Protestant Christianity, or Biblical Dogma; so

*Some of the Philosophical Essays by Joseph Dietzgen. Translated by M. Beer and Rothstein. Chicago 1906. p. 109.

†Religion of Socialism. p. 52.

the religion of collective and co-operative industry is Humanism, which is only another name for Socialism."*

The "New Yorker Volkszeitung," the principal representative of scientific socialism in New York State, writes under date of October, 1901:

"Socialism and belief in God as it is taught by Christianity and its adherents are incompatible. *Socialism has no meaning unless it is atheistic,* unless it declares that we do not need so-called divine help, because we are able to help ourselves. Only the man who ceases to believe begins to feel that he can act. The laborer who relies on God, who in the piety of his heart assumes that all that God does is well done—how can that same laborer develop revolutionary forces for the overthrow of authority and social order, both of which, according to his faith, are instituted by God?"†

## Section II

### *Socialism is Hatred of Religion*

It might nevertheless seem that socialism is not incompatible with religious toleration. The materialist, though avowedly not religious, may live peacefully with religionists; he may and in many cases does tolerate them, even to such an extent as to grant them full freedom to live up to

*Ibid. p. 81.

†Socialism. Cathrein. p. 320.

their convictions. He may do so either from a liberal disposition of mind, which induces him to grant to others the freedom which he claims for himself, or for prudential reasons, seeing that the contrary policy disturbs public peace, or that religious ideas still exercise a beneficial influence on the masses. It has repeatedly been asserted that such toleration is in reality the religious attitude of socialists. We are assured again and again that socialism, though it abolishes undue political privileges of the Church or resists its encroachments, nevertheless acknowledges its full freedom within its proper sphere and willingly grants it unrestricted liberty in the administration of its own affairs. As a proof of this it is alleged that such a policy was advocated by the German social democrats in the Erfurt program. This demands that religion be declared a private matter, that the use of public funds for ecclesiastical and religious purposes be abolished, that ecclesiastical and religious communities be regarded as private associations, endowed with perfect freedom to manage their own concerns.

Is this demand generally made by socialist bodies in their programs? For it ought to be general, if it is to serve as good evidence of the religious toleration of socialism as such. It is contained in several European programs. But it is totally absent from the platforms of the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labor Party of America. In the Argentine plat-

form we find planks directly to the contrary. The "International Socialist Review" (November, 1903) copies from the "Neue Zeit" the following report:

"The fifth congress of the Argentine Socialist Party met in Buenos Ayres on the seventh and eighth of July, 1903. . . . The congress adopted after great discussion a long new party program with a so-called minimal program to which every half-way liberal and radical party can subscribe with good grace. Among others there are anti-clerical planks, since the party officials believe that they can best meet the attacks of the church with a decisive anti-religious program. They are unwilling to let religion be a private affair and seek to pledge the members to strong anti-church tactics."

American socialists, then, need not appeal to the Erfurt program. But even if the demand in question is found in a party platform, it furnishes no proof whatever for religious toleration. Immediate demands contained in socialist programs do not enunciate the ultimate object of socialism. They only point out steps to be taken and concessions to be obtained from governments for the present, objects which are kept in view, because more can not be attained under given circumstances, measures which are regarded as valuable, because they prepare the way to the attainment of further ends and at last to the emancipation of the proletariat. The

final tendency, therefore, of socialism is just as little explained by the immediate demands as its theoretical basis is set forth in the doctrinal parts of its programs.

Nay, if we look somewhat more closely at the famous demand pretending to grant religious liberty and toleration, we shall find that in reality it often aims at persecution. It has found a place in socialist programs in countries where the Church has numerous members who desire to enjoy its blessings and follow its teachings not only in their private but also in their public life; where in the course of time it had acquired rights which the civil power could not ignore; where its lawful property has been confiscated by the State in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, and where now, in accordance with solemn treaties, a subsidy is due to it as an indemnity.

Under such circumstances the declaration that religion is a private affair, deprives the Church of its lawful rights and property, banishes it into privacy, where it is unable to defend itself when attacked as a social body, places it in the impossibility of publicly instructing the masses of the people and of exercising a due influence on the education of youth. At the same time that the Church is thus shackled and exiled from public life, the fullest freedom is granted to atheism or materialism to spread its tenets in the press, to infuse them into the minds of the rising generation in primary and

secondary schools, as also at universities. Is this not oppression and persecution of religion? Is it not an attempt to exterminate it as far as circumstances allow?

Our interpretation of the Erfurt program harmonizes with the comment given by the "Zimmerer," a German trades-union journal. It reads in part:

"The expression of the socialist platform: 'Religion is a private concern' is often taken to mean that socialists should abstain from religious questions, that to do otherwise is an infraction of the party platform. This, of course, is not and can not be its meaning. Upon closer inspection it will appear that the demand for declaring religion a private matter is in the second part of the platform which contains the principal demands made for the present. The meaning is, therefore, that the *present State should look upon religion as a private concern,* that the State should in consequence make no appropriations for any religious purpose or discriminate in favor of or against any denomination. The above expression does not manifest the attitude of socialism toward religion; it merely declares the attitude toward religion to be assumed by the existing governments. This demand is directed against the arrogance and the encroachments of the Church, which should be regarded and treated as a mere private association. If our demand, however, is interpreted to mean

that socialists have no right to bother about the question of religion, it is thereby made a bulwark of the Church. The modern labor movement would suffer a thorn to remain in its flesh, if it allowed any obscurity to subsist concerning its attitude toward religious belief. *Social democracy* as a philosophical system can have no other relation to the Church than to *reject its soporifics and to wage relentless war on by far the greater part of its doctrines.* This attitude is postulated already by the very fact that the Church demands faith in a God of infinite goodness, wisdom, and justice, against whose will not even a sparrow falls from the roof."*

Were socialism merely a theory taught in schools, it might in practical life be reconcilable with religious toleration. But it is not only a theory, but a movement, to which the theory imparts light and direction, life and energy. The doctrinal tenets, therefore, must be spread among the rank and file of the socialists and be instilled into their minds. Hence the circulation of the works of Marx and Engels and their interpreters among the educated, hence the spreading of numerous pamphlets and of periodical literature to popularize the socialist doctrine and bring it home to working men as well as women. From this connection between the socialist theory and the socialist movement an anti-religious attitude follows as a

*Socialism. Cathrein. pp. 212, 213, footnote.

necessary consequence. What else than hatred and contempt of religion can result from the scornful denial of the existence of God so often repeated, from the derision of the divine worship resounding everywhere in socialist literature? Let us hear some utterances that come from the mouths both of masters and pupils and are heard in all countries on both sides of the ocean.

The following are sayings of Marx:

Religion is an "absurd sentiment," "a fantastical degradation of human nature."

"Man makes religion, not religion man."

"Religion is the sentiment of a heartless world as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions." "It is the opium of the people."

"Religion is only an illusory sun, which revolves around man as long as man fails to revolve around himself."

"Religion is the self-consciousness of a human being that has either not yet found itself or again lost itself."*

It has recently been maintained by J. Spargo that Marx opposed professional atheism. In the "International Socialist Review," March 1908, Spargo grants him to be an agnostic. But the above quotations, verified by Cathrein and Untermann, show hatred and contempt for all religion so intense that they can not be interpreted merely as agnosticism, but must be taken for positive atheism.

*Socialism. Cathrein. p. 215. Int. Soc. Rev. Aug. 1905. pp. 93-95.

Engels expresses his contempt for religion in almost the same terms as Marx. In his criticism of the socialist platform he demanded that the labor party declare its intention "of delivering men's conscience from the specter of religion."

In his "Anti-Duehring" he writes:

"Religion is nothing but the fantastic reflection in the brains of men of those powers by whom their daily existence is dominated, a reflection in which the natural forces assume supernatural forms."

In a letter of 1890 published in the "Leipziger Volkszeitung" he maintains that the higher ideologies of religion, philosophy, etc., still in vogue are prehistorical and traditional, consisting of what we nowadays term nonsense, gradually to exterminate which and to replace with new but ever less absurd nonsense is the task of science.*

E. Untermann quotes him as saying:

"Man lost in religion his own nature, divested himself of his manhood. Now that religion has lost its hold on the human mind through historical development, man becomes aware of the void in him and of his lack of support. There is no other salvation for him, if he wishes to regain his manhood, than to thoroughly overcome all religious ideas and return sincerely, not to 'God' but to himself."†

*Woltmann. Der Historische Materialismus. p. 243.

†Int. Soc. Rev. Aug. 1905. p. 96.

Bebel, repeating a saying of the frivolous poet Heine, leaves "Heaven to the angels and the sparrows." From his numerous utterances breathing intense contempt for God and religion we quote the following:

"It is not the gods that create man; it is man who turns the gods into God."

"In the image of himself (man) he creates Him (God), not the opposite way."

"Monotheism has also suffered changes. It has dissolved into pantheism that embraces and permeates the universe; . . . it volatilizes day by day. Natural science reduced to myth the dogma of the creation in six days; astronomy, mathematics, physics, have converted heaven into a structure of air."

"Morality and ethics have nothing to do with organized religion. The contrary is asserted only by weak-minded people or hypocrites."*

Liebknecht writes in the "Berliner Volksblatt," 1890, n. 281:

"We may peacefully take our stand upon the ground of socialism, and thus conquer the stupidity of the masses in so far as this stupidity reveals itself in religious forms and dogmas."†

J. G. Brooks in his "Social Unrest" remarks:

"A single passage from Liebknecht's paper ('Der Volkstaat') in 1875 stands fairly for opin-

*Woman. pp. 321, 322.

†Cathrein. Socialism. p. 216.

ions that may be quoted from twenty authoritative sources:

" 'It is our duty as socialists to root out the faith in God with all our zeal, nor is one worthy of the name who does not consecrate himself to the spread of atheism.' "*

James Leatham, an English socialist, says in the preface to his "Socialism and Character" (1899):

"Faith, properly so called, is dead. The belief in God with all it implies is now without a *raison d'être*. The original conception of God has everywhere been that of a Creator, a great Master Workman of the Universe, who made it and who sustains it. But the idea of creation is now given up. The conception of a universe beginning to be out of nothing is found, even by Roman Catholic theologians (?), to be unthinkable, and they now speak of God and the universe as 'coexistent entities.' "

"Nor is the conception of God, the Sustainer, any longer an intellectual necessity, as it was when men could not account for the phenomena of Nature in terms of the natural. There is nothing left for the deity to do."†

Robert Blatchford, the famous English socialist and agnostic, writes:

"The greatest curse of humanity is ignorance;

*Social Unrest. New York 1903. p. 302.

†Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 115.

religion, being based on authority, is naturally opposed to knowledge."*

To present the views also of American socialists let us first quote from two ex-ministers of the Gospel: G. D. Herron, ex-minister of the Congregational Church and ex-professor of Applied Christianity; and from William Thurston Brown, formerly pastor of the Plymouth Church in Rochester, N. Y., both now prominent leaders in the Socialist Party.

G. D. Herron, in a lecture on the "Co-operative Life" delivered in the Chicago Temple, and printed in "Socialist Spirit" January, 1903, tells his audience:

"All religions the world has ever seen have been imposed for the purpose of preventing the operation of the collective will. They have been mere philosophies of submission, aiming at the subjection of the people. The world has therefore only advanced as the collective will has found halting expression in successive revolutions made against these imposed dogmas, both the church and the state. Thus humanity can hope to advance only as it forsakes all reliance upon any resources outside the common life. The common life and its common aims, aspirations, and efforts must be its own saviour. He makes even now its own heaven and its own hell."†

*God and My Neighbor. Chicago. p. 195.
†Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 111.

W. T. Brown is quoted as saying in a sermon:

"The truth is, as all thinking men are aware, we have no such thing as intellectual honesty in the sphere of religion. We have made religion a department of human thought and action in which moral principles do not figure. We have not even succeeded in getting a conception of God that has any moral quality. The deity men pray to and exhibit in theological systems is not a moral being. He does not act in accord with principles, but at his own caprice or to meet unforeseen emergencies."*

To these unmistakable utterances of the two ex-ministers we add a clause from E. Untermann's profession of faith in the "Appeal to Reason," February 21, 1903:

"Religious dogma is a survival of the childhood of the race, when man bowed in fear and superstition to the unknown forces of nature and endowed them with human names and qualities. The Manitou of the North American Indian, the Zeus of the Greek, the Jupiter of the Roman, the Jehovah of the Jew and the God of the modern Christian, are all the result of the same feeling of impotence in the face of the elements of nature. They bear the same visible marks of the human hand, and clearly testify to the fact that God was made in the image of man, and not man in the image of any God. They are fit subjects in the romantic and ignorant

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 122.

imagination of undeveloped races or of the children of more advanced nations. They are nothing but the heroes of fairy tales by which nations testify to their religious feelings. Up to a certain state of mental development, they perform a useful service, by keeping a dim light of higher aims burning in the minds of men. But the mature minds of deeper thinkers do not find any rest nor any inspiration in those idols, and demand a new and better foundation for their march toward godhood."

Intense, indeed, is the hatred and contempt of religion expressed in the foregoing quotations. But these embittered sentiments do not spring merely from the individual views of socialist writers. No, they are the necessary outcome of socialism under both its aspect as a materialistic system of philosophy and an economic and political movement.

## Section III

### *Reasons for the Socialist Hatred and Contempt of Religion*

According to the materialistic conception of history, religion is always the result of the prevailing economic conditions. It, consequently, is not divine, but human, not stable and above time, but changeable, waxing and waning. Its history is dependent on the ever-changing and ever-succeeding economic conditions. Its beginning reaches down

to the time of savagery and barbarism; its progress is contemporaneous with and dependent on human civilization, with arts and sciences, with commerce and industries; its termination will be fixed by the establishment of normal economic conditions for the whole of mankind. Viewed in this light of socialist philosophy and interpreted by these causes, the origin of religion can not but inspire contempt, its growth can not but call forth hatred and opposition, its final destiny can not be but extinction.

The origin of religion is regularly traced back by socialist writers to the economic condition existing in prehistoric times, when man had scarcely yet risen above the animal kingdom.

According to Engels, the first gods came into existence through the personification of the forces of nature, and acquired greater and greater supernatural power by the development of religion, until, by a natural process of abstraction, out of their multitude one all-embracing deity arose. Later on, when the groups of families divided into tribes, national deities and national religions were developed on the basis of economic conditions.

"Religions arose at a very remote period of human development, in the savage state, from certain erroneous and barbaric conceptions of men with regard to themselves and the outside world of nature around them. Every ideological notion develops, however, when once it has arisen; it grows by addition to the given idea and develops it fur-

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ther, otherwise there would be no ideology, that is, no occupation with thoughts as with independent thought-existence, developing independently and subject only to its own laws."

"These original religious notions, therefore, which are for the most part common to each kindred group of families, develop after the separation of the group in a special manner to each tribe, according to its particular conditions of existence, and this process is for a class of groups of people and particularly for the Aryans (Indo-Europeans) shown individually by comparative mythology. The gods developed by each tribe were national gods, whose power extended no further than to protect the national territory; beyond the frontier other gods held undisputed sway. They could only be conceived of as existing as long as the nation existed. They fell with its decline."*

A fuller explanation of the origin of religion is given by A. Loria and B. Bax. According to Loria, the idea of the deity and its worship originated in the following manner:

"Recognizing the futility of his attempts to conquer matter by his own labor, the human being is wont to regard nature's resistance in the light of a hostile force, as an emanation of a will superior to his own, which by prayers and offerings he seeks to render propitious. There is, indeed, nothing more natural than that the individual, who feels

*Feuerbach. pp. 118, 119.

himself powerless to overcome the resistance of nature by his own physical force, should see in such resistance the work of a supernatural being, against whose might his own powers are dissipated, and whom supplications and sacrifices alone can appease; nothing more natural, in other words, than that the technically inadequate human economy, instead of endeavoring to protect itself, should invoke the aid of religion. The priests by invoking rain can drive away the drought, wizards are able to cure diseases, discover the whereabouts of criminals and guarantee property against theft. The fetish directs the course of the lance and arrow if the hand of man be incapable. It is, therefore, in no wise strange that the religious sentiment is thus developed as the psychological product of isolated or coactively associated labor."*

The idea of God once formed was further developed.

"Having personified the adverse forces of nature and identified them at will with one or more supersensible beings, the human mind then passed on to a fantastic conception of these creatures of its imagination, and elaborated in fancy their mode of life and their attitude toward human beings. In appointing the reciprocal relations among these supernatural beings, the mind naturally co-ordinated them in a series which faithfully reflected the human hierarchy and reproduced in heaven all the

*Economic Foundations of Society. pp. 22, 23.

castes and class distinctions by which the earth has so long been dishonored. Thus among the gods as well as among men there are the great and the small, nobles and plebeians, the rich and the poor, freemen and slaves."*

The worship of the gods consisted in appeasements and invocations, in order to obtain their aid and support in man's struggle with nature. It was essentially selfish and devoid of morality.

"Religion, in the sense of an invocation of divine aid through prayers and offerings, does not imply morality. Morality is a relation between man and man, religion is a relation between man and God; and these two relations may very well be disconnected and exist independently of each other. This is so true that in many religions the moral element is absolutely lacking."†

Bax similarly describes the origin of gods and of divine worship.

"In the most ancient civilizations there is no separation between the political or social and the religious, simply because religion was then nothing more than the propitiation of dead ancestors, powers of nature, fetishes or supposed supernatural agents (whose existence passed unquestioned to the human mind in its then stage) in the interest of society. These ancestral ghosts, personified powers or animated fetishes, were as often

*Ibid. pp. 25, 26.

†Ibid. p. 28.

immoral as not; in fact it would be more correct to say that for them morality and immorality had no existence. The worshiper possibly cared not one jot for them or they for him—his worship was a social duty. The only way in which they possessed any human interest was as embodying certain powers, which might be noxious or beneficent *to the State*."*

The practices which religion then embodied were invocations by magic formulæ, spells, and incantations, designed to compel the will of the occult or invisible agent to that of the invocator. Still primitive religion, as Bax conceives of it, was not selfish, but social, insomuch that every religious act was political, and every political act was also religious. For man had at that time not yet separated himself from society, and it was, therefore, only in its interest that he implored the gods for aid.

If such were really the origin of religious ideas and practices, religion would, indeed, as Engels said, be nothing else than nonsense, the offspring of grossest ignorance, worthy of the utmost contempt of every thinking man.

Religion, as developed from the economic conditions during the historical ages, appears in a still worse plight. According to the most competent interpreters of socialism, after the introduction of private property, religion was evolved merely as

*Religion of Socialism. p. 49.

a means to preserve the domination of the possessing classes. Presented in this light, it can not but provoke to opposition the entire body of militant socialists. Bebel when speaking of this subject is very plain:

"Religion," says he, "is the transcendental reflection of the social conditions of given epochs. In the measure that human development advances and society is transformed, religion is transformed along with it. It is, as Marx put it, a popular striving after the illusory happiness that corresponds with a social condition which needs such an illusion. The illusion wanes as soon as real happiness is descried, and the possibility of its realization penetrates the masses. The ruling classes endeavor, in their interest, to prevent this popular conception; hence they seek to turn religion into a means to preserve their domination. The purpose appears fully in this maxim 'The people must be held to their religion.' This particular business becomes an official function in a society that rests upon class rule. A caste is formed that assumes this function and that turns the whole acumen of their minds toward preserving and enlarging such a social structure, seeing that thereby their own power and importance are increased."

"The ruling class, finding itself threatened in its existence, clings to religion as a prop of authority, just as every ruling class has done heretofore. The bourgeoisie or capitalist class itself believes in noth-

ing. Itself, at every stage of its development and through the modern science that sprang from none but its own lap, has destroyed all faith in religion and authority. Its faith is only a pretense, and the Church accepts the help of this false friend, because it is itself in need of help. 'Religion is necessary for the people.' "*

Enrico Ferri fully coincides with Bebel in this view. To quote his own words:

"Socialism does not feel the necessity of waging a special warfare against these religious beliefs, which are destined to disappear. It has assumed this attitude, although it knows the absence or impairment of the belief in God is one of the most powerful factors for its extension, because the priests of all religions have been, throughout all phases of history, the most potent allies of the ruling classes in keeping the masses pliant and submissive under the yoke by means of the enchantment of religion, just as the tamer keeps a wild beast submissive by the terrors of the cracks of his whip. And this is so true, that the most clear-sighted conservatives, even though they are atheists, regret that the religious sentiment—that precious narcotic —is diminishing among the masses, because they see in it, though their pharisaism does not permit them to say it openly, an instrument of political domination."†

*Woman. pp. 320, 321.

†Socialism and Modern Science. p. 63.

Ferri needs not tell us that socialism does not feel the necessity of waging war with religious beliefs. The assertion made before the discontented proletariat, that by the enchantment of religion the masses are made pliant and submissive under the yoke of the ruling classes just as wild beasts are made submissive by the terror of the cracks of the tamer's whip, is itself a declaration of war against all religious denominations.

Loria essays to explain how religion was rendered subservient to the ruling class.

"God becomes, as it were, the capitalist of heaven, crediting men with the good actions performed during their lifetime, and paying them a proportional salary either in this life or in the life to come. Thus the fear of divine punishment succeeds in doing violence to the egoism of the individual, deterring him from acting in conformity with his own interests, and impelling him to acts which are opposed to his own, but in conformity with the real egoism of his oppressors.*

"During the period of slavery, compulsion was effected principally through fear. . . . Religion especially very often served as a cloak to be assumed by the instrument of terrorism, in order to assure the preservation of the slave society. Thus the Jewish religion included nothing beyond a series of threats of earthly ills wherewith God frightened men and prevented them from certain

*Economic Foundations of Society. p. 28.

acts that were socially injurious. The pagan religions likewise threatened the violators of social peace and its system of organized oppression with countless evils."*

A deeper interpretation of the evolution of religion was attempted by Bax. Harmonizing with socialist philosophy as it does, it deserves our attention.

"History, I take it, can not be better defined than as an unraveling of oppositions, the bringing to distinctness of latent contradictions, the realization in their conflict of mutually hostile tendencies. The oppositions wherein history—or which is the same thing otherwise expressed, the development of the State, or of Civilization—consists, may, I think, be reduced to two chief pairs, *i.e.,* the opposition or antagonism between Nature and Mind, and the opposition or antagonism between the Individual and Society. The first opposition spoken of, that between external nature and the human mind, is more immediately of speculative, religious, and artistic significance, while the second, that between individual and society, of more immediately practical interest. But they are intimately connected with each other, and advance *pari passu.* In the antagonism between individual and society is contained the notion of personal ownership of property, with the whole state-machinery, which is its expression. In the antagonism between nature

*Ibid. p. 32.

and mind is given religion, that is, religion in the sense of supernatural or spiritual religion, as opposed to the naïve nature religion of early man."*

Having thus outlined the course of history in general, Bax goes on to characterize the successive stages of social and religious evolution. The foundation of primitive society was the blood family from which first proceeded the gens or class; later on, by the union of groups of families, the tribes. New economic conditions, the introduction of agriculture on a more extended scale, the acquirement of extensive property in flocks, herds, and slaves, the beginning of manufacture, the improvements of the weapons of war, led to a consolidation of an aggregate of tribes into a social system called the *city*. It was in this period that private property and class division between slave and freeman entered into the constitution of society. Cities unable to maintain an independent and separate existence formed federations, which subsequently became united into kingdoms and empires.†

In the meantime religion was developed *pari passu*. First man separated himself from nature and consequently placed deities above it. At a later period and by a wider generalization, he subordinated these deities as well as nature to one all-powerful conscious being. It was with this that

*Ibid. p. 32.

†Religion of Socialism. pp. 6, 7.

man henceforward concerned himself rather than with the process of nature.*

After man and the deity were separated from nature, religion became separated from society.

"In the period of primitive communism and that which immediately succeeded it, religion had for its end and object society; it was the idealistic expression of life in society." "Religious sentiment did not center in the gods, but in the community, whose good or ill was supposed to lie in their power." Nor did religion concern itself with the individual man or with a future world. Still in the cities religion remained for a long time intimately united with the life of the community. In a later period, however, individual interest gained the upper hand over social interest. A slave holding production was exercised for the individual rich citizen, and not as in earlier times for the gens, tribe, or city. Religion steadily gave way to the advance of individualism in economic life, and became less social and more personal. The various mysteries which sprang into vogue had for their end the setting forth of the mystical relations of the individual to the divinity outside nature.†

"With the decay of old civic morality and the absorption of the small free States into concentrated monarchies and finally into the Roman Empire, men came to care less and less for the body politic, and

*Ibid. pp. 7, 8.
†Ibid. pp. 13-17.

fell back more and more upon themselves as individuals. At first this individualism took the form of a search among the leisured and educated class for the higher life of wisdom. The Stoic, the Epicurean and the Cynic had each his special receipt for slipping through life as comfortably as possible. But this, though satisfactory for a time, palled in the long run. The Roman Empire got ever more corrupt, its corruption ramifying through all its branches; public life became more and more vapid; the old religions, once instinct with meaning, were but empty forms; the newer panaceas of the philosophers failed to afford satisfaction."

"But the sense of individualism was too strong for this merely negative creed. Men sought in vain for an object in life, collective or individual. In this state of mind they are confronted by a new Asiatic sect. They become initiated. At once the scene changes. This life is indeed pronounced hopelessly worthless. There is no citizenship here, no happiness for the individual, not even the apathy of the 'wise man.' But as this life crumbles into nothingness, there rises the fair vision of the 'city of God,' joys beyond imagination, not the 'apathy' of 'wisdom,' but the 'peace' of the blest. *Hic Rhodus, hic saltus!* Religion is henceforth separated from life, the religious sphere of *another* world is set over against the irreligious sphere of *this* world. Earth is drained of its ideal to feed Heaven. Society established on this basis involves

the antagonisms of 'temporal and spiritual' powers, of 'world' and Church, of religious and profane, etc., etc. What is said applies not only to Christianity, but more or less to all so-called ethical or universal religions, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, etc. They are the expression of the decay of the old life, and hence they one and all center in the individual and in another world, their concern with this world being purely incidental."*

Religion, then, according to socialist philosophy, has in the course of its evolution become an instrument of exploitation and oppression in the hands of the possessing classes, or has degenerated into a form of individualism absolutely unconcerned with the welfare of society and aiming at personal and imaginary happiness in a future life. Viewed in either respect, it is in the eyes of every consistent socialist an object of hatred, an institution to be impugned and wiped out. Socialism as a movement is essentially a struggle with capitalism, deadly and unrelenting, not to come to an end until capitalism shall be completely crushed by the proletariat. Is it conceivable that it will not persecute and, as much as depends on it, uproot what is constantly pointed out by its leaders as the handmaid of capitalism, as its helpmate in the work of oppression, servile to the oppressor, false and treacherous to the oppressed?

Considered as a form of individualism, religion

*Religion of Socialism. pp. 50, 51.

necessarily hinders the attainment of the end pursued by socialism. The goal of the socialist movement is the co-operative commonwealth, a reconstructed society in which the interest of the individual will be again identified with that of the community, a form of perfect communism in which all will equally reap the fruit of their labor, an earthly paradise in which all will enjoy complete happiness. The way regarded as necessary to reach this goal is faithful association, self-forgetfulness, sacrifice of the private for the common good, disinterested struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. But religion, according to the socialist view, is essentially individualistic, neglectful of the general good, and devoid of the spirit of self-sacrifice. It moreover promises happiness to man not in the *present,* but in another life to come after death, and, hence, despising present, pursues future and impossible enjoyments. There is, consequently, such an intrinsic opposition between socialism and religion, that they can not possibly coexist. Bax has not failed to call attention to this irreconcilable contradiction. To quote his own words:

"We daily see around us the result of 1,600 years of 'other-worldliness' on character and conduct. Men and women upon whom the mere greed for gain palls are driven to the one ideal resource their education has given them or they can comprehend—the hope of a glorified immortality for themselves. Those only who know from better

experience the smile of honest contempt with which such people greet the idea of the sacrifice of personal or class privileges, or anything else for a social object, can appreciate the depth to which the canker has eaten into their souls."*

"The moment this belief in an after-death existence is erected into a dogma, the moment it comes to be looked upon as an article of faith which it is a duty to hold, or at least which it is the evidence of an ignoble disposition of mind not to hold, then it becomes an enemy to be combated."†

## Section IV

### *Abolition of Religion by Socialism*

From the opposition between socialism and religion, it necessarily follows that the triumph of the former will be the utter abolition of the latter. We have quoted above the utterances of several socialists declaring a war of extinction against religion. If socialist society were once to be established and socialism to reign supreme, this war would undoubtedly end in the victory of unbelief. But even were the socialists to abstain from persecution and violent oppression, religious beliefs would, owing to the law of evolution, disappear in their commonwealth. For if they are but the offspring of utter ignorance in the prehistoric times of savagery and barbarism, later on to be made instru-

*Religion of Socialism. p. 51.

†Ethics of Socialism. p. 196.

ments of oppression and exploitation by the possessing classes, it is to be expected that they will cease to exist as soon as mankind will be enlightened by the advanced science of nature, and society will be established on normal economic conditions ensuring full and equal happiness to all members of the human family. The socialists themselves develop this thought at full length and set forth the reasons why with their victory religion will vanish from the earth.

It will disappear, they tell us, when materialism shall be generally adopted and science shall spread its full light. Marx says in this regard:

"Religion must disappear, when the night of ignorance will be dispelled, of which it is the offspring."

J. Dietzgen is still more outspoken:

"The progress or development of religion consists in its gradual dissolution." "Where man becomes *conscious of* his task, where he recognizes in himself the absolute organizer, there the place of the religious conception is taken by the *anti-religious social democracy*."*

Bax says concerning the future society:

"Our ideal will cease to have for its object God and 'another world' and be brought back to its original sphere of social life and this world."

"The devotion of the member of the socialized community, like the devotion of all true socialists

*Philosophical Essays. pp. 118, 121.

to-day, will be based on science and involve no cultus."*

To quote from Loriá:

"Only with the advent of this final social form will the idea of an irresistible power, superior to the forces surrounding mankind, ultimately disappear, and therewith also the religious sentiment, which is its natural corollary."†

"Socialism," Enrico Ferri writes, "knows and foresees that religious beliefs, whether one regards them with Sergi as pathological phenomena of human psychology, or as useless phenomena of moral incrustation, are destined to perish by atrophy with the extension of even elementary scientific culture."

"Unfortunately or fortunately, the religious sentiment can not be re-established by a royal decree. If it is disappearing, the blame for this can not be laid at the door of any particular individual, and there is no need of a special propaganda against it, because its antidote impregnates the air we breathe—saturated with the inductions of experimental science—and religion no longer meets with conditions favorable to its development as it did amid the superstitious ignorance of past centuries."‡

Socialism places final happiness in this life, religion in the life to come; hence Marx says:

*Religion of Socialism. pp. 36, 52.
†Economic Foundations. p. 24.
‡Socialism and Modern Science. pp. 63, 64.

"The abolition of religion as the deceptive happiness of the people is a necessary condition of their happiness."

"Religion will vanish with the change of the unjust economic conditions, with the passing of capitalist production, on which it is based.

"The religious reflex of the real world can, in any case, only then finally vanish, when the practical relations of every-day life offer man none but perfectly just and reasonable relations with regard to his fellow men and to nature."*

Engels makes a still clearer prophecy in his "Anti-Duehring":

"The forces of nature are now known to a great extent. The only basis of religious reflex action yet remaining are the economic conditions, by which man feels himself ruled as by a foreign power. In economic life still the saying holds: man proposes, but God (that is the foreign power of capitalistic production) disposes. But when once the great social deed will have been accomplished, when, by the seizure and the well-concerted administration of all productive means, society will have rescued itself and its members from servitude, and man will not only propose, but also dispose, then the last foreign power which is still reflected in religion will disappear, and with it also religious reflection will cease, for the simple reason that nothing remains

*Capital. London 1902. p. 51.

to be reflected. Then religion will die a natural death."*

Bebel writes in the "Vorwärts" (1901):

"If the direction of civilization is exclusively determined by the forms of economic production, religions themselves only appear as excrescences of a capitalist society, which are destined to disappear with it."†

In "Woman" we read:

"Religion is the transcendental reflection of the social conditions of given epochs. In the measure that human development advances, and society is transformed, religion is transformed along with it. It is, as Marx puts it, a popular striving after the illusory happiness that corresponds with a social condition which needs such an illusion. The illusion wanes so soon as real happiness is descried, and the possibility of the realization penetrates the masses."‡

P. Lafargue, like Engels, foresees the end of religion coming with the triumph of socialism.

"The victory of the proletariat will deliver humanity from the nightmare of religion. The belief in superior beings to explain the natural world and the social inequalities and to prolong the dominion of the ruling class, in the posthumous existence of the soul, to recompense the inequality of

*Umwälzungen der Wissenschaft. pp. 304, 306.
†Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 137.
‡Woman. p. 320.

fate, will have no more justification when once man, who has already grasped the general causes of the phenomena of nature, shall live in a communist society from whence shall have disappeared the inequalities and the injustice of capitalistic society."*

Such are the declarations concerning God and religion made by the very founders of scientific socialism and by its most prominent exponents; declarations which are conclusions drawn with logical necessity from the fundamental tenets of the Marxian theory; declarations, therefore, which must be accepted as genuine statements of socialist thought.

But are there not also protestations made by other socialists to the effect, that socialism is a merely economic and political system without any bearing on religion? Certainly there are, and we shall produce some of them.

The English socialist and agnostic, Robert Blatchford, writes:

"Another charge against Socialists is that they are Atheists, whose aim is to destroy all religion and all morality."

"This is not true. It is true that many Socialists are Agnostics and some are Atheists. But Atheism is no more a part of Socialism than it is a part of Radicalism or Liberalism. Many prominent Socialists are Christians, not a few are clergymen. Many

*Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1903. p. 293.

Liberal and Tory leaders are Agnostics or Atheists. I, for instance, am an Agnostic. . . . Huxley was an opponent of Socialism and an Agnostic. Socialism does not touch religion at any point. It deals with laws, with *industrial* and *political* government."

"It is not sense to say, because some Atheists are Socialists, that all Socialists are Atheists."*

A similar protestation is contained in a letter addressed to the Most Rev. Archbishop S. G. Messmer of Milwaukee by the two socialist leaders Victor L. Berger and Winfield R. Gaylord. It reads:

"We repeat most emphatically, Socialism advances 'purely economic questions.' We repeat most emphatically, Socialism advances no doctrines 'touching matters of religion, ethics, and natural law.' These are private matters of individual belief or knowledge, and Socialism or the Social Democratic Party has nothing to do with them. Of course, we have members who are agnostics, freethinkers, and Darwinians, and who have written articles on these interesting questions. But we have also members who are Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. Very many of our most prominent agitators are ministers of the Gospel. We also have members who are vegetarians and oppose the use of meat. This is their private right. But the Republican party also has freethinkers and schis-

*Real Socialism. What Socialism Is and What It Is Not. (Terre Haute, Ind.) p. 8.

matics . . . in its ranks. . . . The Democratic party also has many adherents who hold all kinds of peculiar views as to the churches and the ethical questions. . . . Then why should you demand of the Social Democratic Party conformity on these questions?"*

What is the objective value of these emphatical protestations? Must we on their account qualify our proposition? Indeed, we must not expect uniformity in the religious attitude among all those who have in one way or another joined the ranks of the socialists. Some of them have only voted a socialist ticket in an election campaign after having listened to some agitator, others have taken part in a strike, each of these two classes being, as a rule, actuated mainly by economic or political motives and having no knowledge whatever of scientific socialism. Their number must be quite considerable; for W. Mailly, the former secretary of the Socialist Party, distinguishing between voters and dues-paying members, says that the latter are not more than 25,000, whereas we know that the former were more than 400,000 in 1904. Undoubtedly it would be nonsense to suppose that all these agree in religious views, or that all socialists are atheists because some of them are.

But the question is what views on religion are entertained by those who are thoroughly imbued with scientific socialism, who consciously and with

*Social Democrat of Milwaukee. Oct. 12, 1904.

full understanding embrace the principles and teachings of socialist philosophy. Or, to use the very words of the authors quoted, the question is, whether socialism as a scientific system contains doctrines touching on matters of religion or not; whether atheism, materialism, and irreligiousness are integral parts of it or not; whether as a social movement it aims at destroying religion and religious institutions or is altogether unconcerned with them.

How the question thus stated is to be answered, can not be doubtful for a moment. Socialist philosophy most certainly is, as we have proved, materialistic and embodies historical materialism as its very soul and essence, and for this very reason, with logical consistency, so exposes the worship of a personal deity to hatred and contempt as to demand its complete extinction. This being the case, let us put some further questions. Do the authors of the protestations quoted renounce scientific socialism, whose teachings they so plainly contradict? It does not seem so, for they continue to profess international socialism, which is identical with it. But then, how can they commit themselves to such self-contradictions? Are they ignorant of the real tenets of scientific socialism? Are they altogether unfamiliar with socialist literature, unacquainted with the teachings of Marx and Engels, Bebel, Ferri, Herron, Lafargue, Untermann, unread in the numerous socialist works, pamphlets, and periodicals, which, setting forth materialistic

views and containing the vilest attacks on religion, are spread all over the country so as to reach even the uneducated working class? Such gross ignorance is scarcely possible, nor would it be creditable to men who publicly speak and write as socialist representatives. What then is the real reason of so emphatic a declaration that socialism is not irreligious? Is it a part of socialist tactics? Is it caution, lest they might be denounced and attacked, or might shock the Christian working men and thus render a propaganda among them impossible? Then we must wonder how these gentlemen dare emphatically deny what they themselves know to be true, and what nowadays the whole world learns from the foremost socialist writers and speakers to be an undeniable fact.

The reputation of socialists would fare much better both as to honesty and learning if, when attacked, they did not deny and disavow the teachings which on other occasions they openly proclaim as the only saving truth and the only science worthy of mankind.

Notwithstanding, then, the occasional denials of some socialist writers, the hostility of socialism to religion is beyond all doubt. Whosoever has given serious attention to this subject will unhesitatingly subscribe to the saying of Dr. Woltmann:

*"Never have the foundations of religion been shattered so thoroughly as by Marxism."**

*Der Historische Materialismus. p. 333.

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# CHAPTER V

## SOCIALISM HOSTILE TO CHRISTIANITY

### SECTION I

### *Socialism Denies Christian Dogma*

CHRISTIANITY is the religion which since the time of Constantine has been professed by all civilized nations. Being officially accepted by the Roman Empire on the eve of its downfall and thus firmly established in public life, it outlived the States of classical antiquity and transmitted their civilization to the invading barbarians. Ever since that epoch, throughout the Middle Ages up to recent times, it has shaped social life in all countries, formed the religious, ethical, juridical, and philosophical ideas of man, and elevated the morals not only of individuals but also of society.

Christianity may be considered as a system of revealed truths, as a cult, and as a divinely established organization. As a system of revealed truths it teaches the existence of the Triune God, self-existent and infinite in perfection, the Creator of the visible universe as well as of the immortal spirits, the Redeemer of mankind, the Highest Good and Last End of all creatures, the Supreme Ruler of the world, the Author of the moral law,

the Judge dealing out just retribution for the observance or the transgression of the right order sanctioned by His authority.

As a cult, Christianity is the worship of the Triune God, implying the perfect submission of man unto His Will, humble faith in His revelation, firm confidence in His bounty, and sincere love of His infinite goodness. As a divinely established organization Christianity is the Church, the society of all believers in Christian revelation united by the bond of faith and charity under the authority of a hierarchy, which has been divinely appointed to teach, sanctify, and govern them and by so doing lead them to their supreme end and happiness in God.

Clothed with these attributes and embodied in this universal society, Christianity stands out in the history of the last sixteen centuries as a great and undeniable fact in the midst of all the changes and vicissitudes of States and empires successively coming into and going out of existence.

Now what is the attitude of socialism toward the Christian religion thus defined and outlined? Does Christianity, on account of its influence on civilization, past and present, on account of the position it holds and ever has held in human society, appear less odious to the consistent socialist, and, in his eyes, command more respect than religion does in general? A closer examination will prove just the reverse. On the one hand, the

very reasons that recommend Christianity to others render it more odious to him, and on the other, whatever reasons render religion in general vile and contemptible in his eyes are found in Christianity to the widest extent. Christianity and socialism, therefore, are, as Bebel puts it, opposed to each other like fire and water. As a necessary consequence, the attitude of the socialist toward it is one of deadly and irreconcilable hostility.

Socialism first of all denies the entire system of revealed dogmas.

What can be a more emphatical denial of Christian theism than materialistic monism? But this kind of monism is the fundamental theory of scientific socialism. Well does Ladoff say:

"Christianity can not be harmonized with monistic philosophy. Christianity represents an entirely different cycle of ideas and conceptions than modern monistic philosophy and must of necessity be diametrically opposed to modern socialism, which is nothing else but the application of monism or evolution to society as an organization of men. To combine the terms Christianity and socialism is just as sensible as to combine the terms anarchism and socialism. One excludes the other as its antithesis, as its negation."*

God as known by Christian revelation is to the materialist and socialist no less absurd than the god of the primitive savages. To E. Untermann's

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 49.

mind the Manitou of the North-American Indian, the Zeus of the Greek, the Jupiter of the Roman, the Jehovah of the Jew and the God of the modern Christian are all the result of the same feeling of impotence in the face of the elements of nature.*

According to Labriola, the Christian God is but a mythical creation.

"It is to be observed that at an opposite point of historic evolution a great number of thinkers of the past century reduced to a simple abstract God, who is a simple regent of the world, all that variegated image of the unknown and transcendental type, developed in so great a wealth of mythological, Christian, or pagan creations."†

Lafargue shows still greater contempt for the God of Christian revelation. He says of Jehovah:

"The ancestral gods concerned themselves only with family affairs. The Jehovah of the Bible was a god of this kind; he lodged in a wooden box, called Ark of the Covenant, which was carried along when the tribes changed their locations; they put it at the head of the army, that Jehovah might fight for his people."‡

The God in whom the Christians believe is to Lafargue a monster of cruelty, not better than the heathen gods and not different from them.

"The God of the first Christians is a pitiless exe-

*Appeal to Reason. Feb. 21, 1903.

†Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History. p. 218.

‡Social and Philosophical Studies. p. 35.

cutioner, who takes a savory pleasure in feasting his eyes on the tortures inflicted for all eternity on the infidels, his enemies. 'The Lord Jesus,' says St. Paul, 'shall ascend into heaven with the angels of his power, with burning flames of fire, working vengeance against those who know not God and who obey not the Gospel; they shall be punished with an everlasting punishment before the face of God and before the glory of his power. 2 Thess. i. 6-9.' "*

"The new divinities Isis, Demeter, Dionysos, Mithra, Jesus, etc., several of whom belonged to the matriarchal epoch, still took on the human form, though the need was beginning to be felt of a Supreme Being, which should not be anthropomorphic."†

"Impersonal property without any doubt leads him (the capitalist) to amalgamate the gods of the earth into one sole and cosmopolitan God, who according to the various countries bears the name of Jesus, Allah, or Buddha, and is worshiped according to different rites."‡

On a materialistic basis all these views are held with perfect consistency. The supramundane self-existent Cause and Supreme Ruler being denied as an absurd, unthinkable fiction, the teachings of religion concerning the Triune God, His infinite per-

*Ibid. p. 32.
†Ibid. p. 37.
‡Ibid. p. 39.

fection, omniscience, wisdom, and providence must be regarded as mere fictions and aberrances of the human mind, differing from the imaginings of savages only by their being more abstruse and elaborate.

Robert Blatchford in his "God and My Neighbor" having specifically denied every Christian dogma,* goes on to blaspheme the divinity in the vilest terms.

"The biblical God, Jehovah or Iehova, was fickle, jealous, dishonorable, immoral, vindictive, barbarous, cruel; he was a tribal God, an idol made by man, and as the idol of a savage and ignorant tribe, was himself a savage and ignorant monster."†

The Heavenly Father, the God of Christian religion, is, according to him, a myth, a baseless shadow of a wistful human dream.‡

Of Christ he says:

"The teachings of Christ were imperfect and inadequate. That they contain some moral lessons I admit. But some of the finest and most generally admired of the lessons do not appear to have been taught by Christ, and for the rest, there is nothing in his ethics that had not been taught by men before and little that has not been extended and improved by men since his era."§

*God and My Neighbor. Chicago. pp. 8-13.
†Ibid. p. 49.
‡Ibid. p. 78.
§Ibid. p. 152.

"God and My Neighbor" has been reprinted by the socialist publishing company in Chicago for the American public. Charles Kerr, the publisher, recommends it in the preface by the following remark:

"I recommend this book by Robert Blatchford as one of the clearest, sanest, most sympathetic, and most helpful discussions of the deep and vital problem of religion that it has ever been my good fortune to read."

In his pamphlet "What to Read on Socialism" the same publisher quotes from Blatchford the following words as a proof that he offers a philosophy based on facts including a workable system of ethics:

"Rightly or wrongly I am for reason against dogma, for evolution against revelation, for humanity always; for earth, not Heaven, for the holiest Trinity of all—the Trinity of man, woman, and child."

As to redemption in particular, there is neither a God-man that could accomplish it, nor is there anything in man that should require it. For as there exists no God, no incarnation of a divine person is possible. Nor could man contract a guilt in the sight of a not-existing God, or fear a punishment in the life to come, if there is no immortal spirit in him. There is according to socialist views only one evil from which man needs be rescued, oppression and exploitation by the possessing

classes, and only one true and real good which he must pursue as his happiness, the peace and abundance of the co-operative commonwealth. To rescue him from this one evil and secure him this one happiness is the object of the socialist movement. Socialism, therefore, and not Christianity is the true redemption of mankind. All this is loudly and emphatically heralded by socialist writers.

The Berlin "Vorwärts" says in a Christmas reflection:

"We believe in no Redeemer, but we believe in redemption. No man, no God in human form, no Saviour, can redeem humanity. Only humanity itself—only laboring humanity—can save humanity."

On Easter, 1896, the same journal wrote:

"About 1863 years ago, according to the Christian legend, the founder of Christianity died on the cross, because he had advocated equality among men. On the day when international socialism shall cast off the twofold yoke of mammon, . . . the million-headed son of man—the laboring populace will celebrate his resurrection. The celebration of that resurrection is our Easter-day, the Easter-day of humanity."

In an article on Pentecost, 1893, the "Vorwärts" told its readers:

"The founders of the Christian Church grafted Christian myth, feasts, and institutions upon pagan myths. . . . According to the Christian

myth, the Holy Ghost came down on the first Pentecost. . . . Socialism is also a new doctrine and proclaims the joyful gospel of redemption, but not of redemption through a Messias. May the disciples to-day and to-morrow pour out the spirit of socialism upon thousands of unbelievers."*

In the words of J. Dietzgen:

"*Work* is the name of the new Redeemer." "Conscious, systematic organization of social labor is the redeemer of modern times."†

In nearly the same terms, the "New Yorker Volkszeitung" wrote of Christmas. Having traced back this feast to Egyptian and Greek myths, it says:

"We do not believe in the Saviour of the Christians; our Saviour will come in the shape of the world-redeeming principle of socialism."‡

Blatchford advances the following proof against redemption:

"Man never did and never could sin against God. For man is what God made him, could only act as God enabled him or constructed him to act, and therefore was not responsible for his acts and could not sin against God. . . . If God is responsible for man's existence, God is responsible for man's act. Therefore man could not sin against God. Evolution, historical research, and

*Quoted by Cathrein, Socialism. pp. 213, 214.
†Philosophical Essays. pp. 94, 101.
‡Quoted by Cathrein, Socialism. p. 221.

scientific criticism have disposed of Adam. Evolution proves a long, slow *rise*. If the theory of evolution be true, there was nothing to atone for, and nobody to atone. *Man had never sinned against God.* In fact the whole of this old Christian doctrine is a mass of error. There was no creation. There was no fall. There was no atonement. There was no Adam and no Eve, and no Eden and no devil, and no hell."*

As seen from these utterances, Christian dogma is fundamentally denied and directly contradicted by socialist philosophy.

## Section II

### *Socialism Condemns Christian Worship*

Christianity as divine worship is submission to God, the Supreme Being, the Supreme Lord and Lawgiver, the Supreme Truth, and the Supreme Good; a submission the more complete, the more distinctly and the more explicitly the divine attributes are stated in the Christian creed and set forth by Christian theology.

But nothing can be more repugnant to materialistic socialism than submission to a Supreme Lord. There exists, according to the materialistic monistic conception, no being, no cause, no power distinct from and above the visible universe. Why then humbly submit to a power that has no existence?

*God and My Neighbor. pp. 124, 125.

Moreover, according to evolutionary materialism, man is himself the supreme being. There is no higher perfection, no higher reason than his, because he is the ultimate and highest evolution. He, therefore, is not subject to any superior, but is autonomous, his own law and his own end. Nor is he in need of help from above or from without. Within mankind itself lies the power of growing and developing, and it is by relying on it alone that man advances to higher stages of perfection. Socialists are full well acquainted with these monistic axioms.

Walt Whitman, the "Poet of the Wider Selfhood," the favorite bard of American socialists, writes:

"None but have found you imperfect—I only find no imperfection in you. None but would subordinate you—I only am he who will never consent to subordinate you. I only am he who places over you no master, owner, better, God, beyond what waits intrinsically in yourself."*

G. D. Herron in a passage quoted above says:

"Humanity can hope to advance only as it forsakes all reliance upon any resource outside the common life. The common life and its common aims, aspirations, and efforts must be its own saviour. It makes even now its own heaven and its own hell."†

*What to Read on Socialism. Nov. 1906. p. 39.
†Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 111.

The French socialist, Jaurès, declared:

"If God himself rose up before us in a palpable form, the first duty of man should be to refuse him obedience and to consider him as an equal with whom one disputes rather than a Master whom one accepts."*

E. Untermann in his confession of faith in the "Appeal to Reason," February 21, 1903, says:

"If a supreme being created this world in its beginning, and then left us to ourselves, because we refused to submit to a divine tyrant, so much the worse for him. We have managed to struggle along without his help so long, and can also rise higher without him in the future. If, on the other hand, we have developed from a protoplasm to our present advanced stage, there is so much more reason to expect that we shall develop equally high in the eternity to come, by the same means that have brought us thus far."

The Austrian socialists, May 20, 1898, adopted a resolution proposed by Pernerstorfer, which contains the following clause:

"Socialism is directly contradictory to Roman Clericalism, which is enslaved to unyielding authority, immutable dogmas, and absolute intellectual thraldom. We doubt all authority, . . . we are champions of right, liberty, and conscience. . . . Besides the struggle for the economic demands, we also combat for the highest spiri-

*Quoted by the Messenger. New York. June 1905. p. 694.

tual possessions. And this ancient struggle between light and darkness will be decided in favor of light, in favor of socialism."*

Christian religion demands faith in divine revelation as a submission of the human understanding to God. But, according to monistic and socialist teaching, faith so defined is absolutely repugnant to human reason. It is so from every point of view, whether we consider the motives on which it rests, the divine authority together with the fact of divine revelation, or the dogmas to which it is an assent, the articles of the Christian creed.

Reason, if autonomous, as the socialists regard it, can not submit to a higher authority, nor can it hold as true what is not manifest to it through its own light and by its own inquiry.

Jaurès asserted this supremacy of human reason when he said:

"Humanity sits like a great commission of inquiry whose powers are limitless."

Ladoff predicts the extinction of faith and the reign of science for the future.

"Faith was the watchword of the past; reason shall be the guide of the future. To doubt was a crime in the good olden time; to criticize and test the truth of all the phenomena of life shall be the moral duty of the future. Tradition and authority constituted the bulwark of the past; knowledge shall be the cornerstone of the future. Man was

*Quoted by Cathrein, Socialism. p. 219.

considered by our forefathers a mere toy in the hands of capricious deities. Science emancipated man from the phantoms of his own imagination and showed him the way to be master of his own destinies."*

The subject-matter of Christian faith, the articles of the creed, are supersensible and supernatural truths, eternal, unchangeable, and necessary; truths moreover which are far beyond the reach of unaided reason, though they can not be proved to be contradictory to its principles. And yet, though they are such, the Christian mind gives assent to them with absolute certitude and unshaken firmness. But the socialist rejects as imaginary and unreal all that is beyond the material world or is above sensuous experience; he denies eternal and necessary truths of whatever kind, excepting only the endless chain and perpetual succession of phenomena, and consequently repudiates also knowledge of a more than relative and temporary value and condemns firm and unalterable assent of the mind to any truth.

Evidently, then, Christian faith must be to the socialist, as indeed to any materialist and evolutionist, the height of absurdity.

No less stubbornly is the fact of divine revelation denied on which Christian faith rests as a necessary basis. According to socialist views, the origin of the Christian as of any other religion is to be

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 51.

retraced, not to divine interference, which is but imaginary and fictitious, but to economic conditions prevailing in barbarian and civilized ages. Marx himself accounts for the rise and the different forms of Christianity by the manner in which production of commodities was carried on in the civilized ages.

"The religious world is but the reflex of the real world. And for a society based upon the production of commodities, in which the producers in general enter into social relations with one another by treating their products as commodities and values, whereby they reduce their individual private labor to the standard of homogeneous labor—for such a society Christianity with its *cultus* of abstract man, more especially in its bourgeois developments, Protestantism, Deism, etc., is the most fitting form of religion."*

Engels traces the origin of the Christian creed to a mixture of oriental religions and Greek philosophy and finds the cause of its general adoption in Western Europe in the peculiar political and economic conditions of the Roman Empire.

"The old national gods fell as those of the Romans did also, which were only attached to the narrow limits of the city of Rome. The desire to make the empire a world-empire, by means of a world-wide religion, is clearly shown in the attempts to provide recognition and altars in Rome

*Capital. vol. i. p. 51.

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for all the respectable foreign gods, next to the indigenous ones. But a new world-religion was not to be made in this fashion by imperial decrees. The new world-religion, Christianity, had already arisen in secret by a mixture of combined oriental religions, Jewish theology, and popularized Greek philosophy and particularly Stoic philosophy. We must first be at pains to discover how it originally made its appearance, since its official form as it has come to us is merely that of a State religion and this end was achieved through the Council of Nice. Enough, the fact that after two hundred and fifty years (?) it was a State religion shows that it was a religion answering to the circumstances of the times."*

In like manner Kautsky† and Labriola‡ explain the rise of Christianity by the economic and social conditions of the Roman commonwealth under the emperors.

Lafargue discovers the basis of Christianity in the economic conditions of bourgeois society, and the elements of its teachings in prehistoric traditions and the data of Greek philosophy.

"The economic conditions in which the bourgeoisie moves and develops make of it a class essentially religious. Christianity is its work and will last as long as this class shall rule society.

*Feuerbach. p. 120.

†Neue Zeit. xv. Jahrgang. i. 215.

‡Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History. p. 218.

Seven or eight centuries before Christ, when the bourgeoisie had its birth in the commercial and industrial cities of the Mediterranean basin, we may observe the elaboration of a new religion; the gods of paganism created by warrior tribes could not be suited to a class consecrated to the production and sale of merchandise. Mysterious cults . . . bring the revival of religious traditions of the prehistoric matriarchal period, the idea of a soul and its existence after death revive; the idea of posthumous punishments and rewards to compensate for acts of social injustice are introduced, etc. These religious elements, combined with the spiritual data of Greek philosophy, contribute to form Christianity, the religion, *par excellence,* of societies which have for their foundation property belonging to the individual and the class which enrich themselves by the exploitation of wage labor. For fifteen centuries all the movements of the bourgeoisie either for organization, or for self-emancipation, or for the acquisition of power have been accompanied or complicated by religious crises, but always Christianity more or less modified remains the religion of society."*

Also Robert Rives La Monte, in an article contributed to the "International Socialist Review," in very clear and definite terms derives the rise and growth of Christianity from economic conditions.

"It would be easy to show how Christianity, like

*Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1903. pp. 292, 293.

all other religions that ever existed, is the natural outgrowth of the economic conditions. As Comrade Stitt Wilson showed, Christianity has not been a crystallized, unchanging thing, but a fluid living thing, acted upon and modified by external influences."*

According to Bax, the moral doctrine taught by Christ resulted from the concentrated thought of generations living before Him.

"The so-called Christian ethics were no more the discovery of Jesus than of Hillel, of Philo, or of any other individual, but, like all great movements and discoveries, were the result of the concentrated thought of generations."†

Robert Blatchford has taken special pains to destroy the credibleness of Christian revelation. As he maintains, Sacred Scripture is forged and falsified, a jumble of ancient myths, allegories, and mysteries. The facts related in the New Testament rest on no trustworthy testimony; not even the existence of Christ is certain and beyond doubt.

"Much of the (Hebrew) Bible is evidently legendary. Here we have a jumble of ancient myths, allegories, and mysteries drawn from many sources and remote ages, and adapted, altered, and edited so many times that in many instances their original or inner meaning has become obscure. And it is folly to accept the tangled legends and

*Ibid. Dec. 1901. p. 435.

†Religion of Socialism. p. 98.

blurred or distorted symbols as the literal history of a tribe and the literal accounts of the origin of man and the genesis of religion."*

"Matthew, John, and Paul were not eye-witnesses to the life and teachings of Christ." "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John did not write the Gospels which bear their names." "There is no certainty who St. Matthew and the other evangelists were."

The Gospels, he further maintains, have no internal evidence, because they teem with miracles, the belief in which science has made impossible. They have been tampered with and falsified in the first times of Christianity and, therefore, can not be accepted as "genuine and unaltered documents."†

"The stories of the Resurrection (of Christ) as told in the Gospels are full of discrepancies and are rendered incredible by the interpolation of miraculous incidents."

"Considering the story of the crucifixion as historical, it can not be said that the evidence of Christ's death is conclusive."‡

"If the events related in the life of Christ have been previously related as parts of the lives of earlier mythical gods, we find ourselves confronted by the possibilities that what is mythical

*God and My Neighbor. p. 36.
†Ibid. pp. 91, 92, 96, 98, 106.
‡Ibid. pp. 92, 94.

in one narrative may be mythical in another; that if one god is a myth, another god may be a myth."

"And yet the incidents of the life and death of Christ, the teachings of Christ and his Apostles, and the rites and mysteries of the Christian church can all be paralleled by similar incidents, ethics, and ceremonies embodied in religions long anterior to the birth of Christ."*

Christianity, therefore, he concludes is founded on ancient myths and legends.

"The resemblances of the legendary lives of Christ and Buddha are surprising; so are also the resemblance of forms and ethics of the ancient Buddhists and the early Christians."

"Does it not seem most reasonable to suppose that Christianity is a religion founded on ancient myths and legends, on ancient ethics, and on ancient allegorical mysteries and philosophical errors?"†

In every respect socialist philosophy is the complete destruction of Christian faith down to its very foundation. It denies the fact of divine revelation, does away with the surrender of man unto God the Creator and especially with the submission of the human understanding to divine authority; it renders impossible any firm assent of the mind to eternal and supersensible truths; instead of Christian thought and conviction it advocates a mental culture, which culminates in the absolute independence

*Ibid. pp. 108, 109.

†Ibid. pp. 112, 114.

of reason, yet at the same time results in skepticism and perpetual fluctuation of the mind.

## Section III

### *Christianity Accused of Immorality*

Christian religion has for its object the union of man with God, consisting in the blissful contemplation and love of the divine nature; a union, however, not to be effected during our earthly existence, but in an immortal life to come. According to Christian teaching, therefore, our present life is not an end in itself, but is only a time of preparation for the attainment of an ultimate end which is above earth and beyond time. Hence its pursuits must not aim at present, but at future happiness, and not at finite and perishable goods, but at the Divine and Infinite Good. This directing of all actions to God as our end is enjoined on us by the moral law revealed naturally by reason and supernaturally by Christ; and the observance or transgression of this order and this law brings eternal retribution, reward consisting in the possession, punishment consisting in the irreparable loss, of the Supreme Good.

In all these respects socialism is the very reverse of Christianity. Disavowing the existence of a personal deity and the spirituality and immortality of the human soul, it denies that God is our su-

preme end and that union with Him constitutes our true happiness in a life to come; denies that true morality consists in the ordering of our actions to Him; denies that there is any retribution after death either for virtue or for vice. Hence it radically opposes Christian ethics so as to leave not one iota of it uncontradicted.

Out of this opposition rises a multitude of charges against Christianity which may be subsumed under the general accusation of immorality. First of all, we hear it said that it deceives man as to his real welfare and happiness. For it turns him away from the pursuit of temporal prosperity, his only real good, and misdirects all his efforts to an unreal and unattainable good; it asks him to resign his earthly goods, to restrain his desires, to discipline his passions, to suffer patiently and meekly, to obey his superiors, in order to prepare himself for a state of happiness never to come. By such moral teaching Christianity has introduced not only a false and injurious asceticism, but also has become in the hands of the ruling class a powerful means of oppression, because it rendered the dispossessed pliant and submissive to cruel domination of the wealthy. For this reason it was universally adopted in the Roman Empire, when slavery was prevailing; it was fostered and developed in the Middle Ages, when vassalage and serfdom flourished; and it is still professed in the capitalistic era, when by the wage system the laboring class

is kept in bondage. Finally, what is of no less importance, Christianity is considered to be positively immoral, because it kills in the human heart disinterestedness and love for social welfare, and, on the contrary, nurtures extreme egoism. For it proposes personal well-being as man's supreme end more effectively than any other religion, because it holds out to him the sublimest happiness and urges him to strive after it by the most stringent commands.

Ladoff makes a fierce attack on Christian asceticism.

"Neo-Christianity or Christ's Christianity, as it is styled by Count Leo Tolstoy and his followers, is not of this world. It does not care about the human mortal frame and its physical well-being. It preaches humility, forbearance, passive submission to evil, meekness—all virtues of slavery and bondage. It wants peace at any price and advocates charity instead of social justice. It indulges in a morbid idealization of physical wretchedness and suffering as an atonement for sins in the eyes of a cruel, humanlike deity. It puts a premium on spiritual poverty and exults in the suppression of all natural human instincts of love for kith and kin in favor of a mystical, slavish submission to the supposed will of a man-made supernatural, heavenly being. Even in its alleged cardinal principle —love of humanity in general—it goes beyond the limits of the normal human mind in advocating

love to those who are our foes. Christianity is thoroughly pessimistic. It does not believe in the inherent force and nobility of human nature, but always insists on its weakness, frailty, and wickedness."*

J. Dietzgen finds servility in the very prayer to God.

"Christianity was recently qualified as the religion of servility. This seems to me a very apt qualification. Indeed, all religions are servile, but Christianity is the most servile. . . . Those who start out in life with the belief in an Almighty God and prostrate themselves before the destinies and forces of nature and in their piteous feeling of impotency moan for mercy, are anything but efficient members of modern society."

"It is more praiseworthy to work oneself up from brutality to the social-democratic ideal than to sink from a heaven-born Adam to the Christian worm, who, conscious of his sinful nonentity, creeps in the dust of humility."†

Others set forth how, owing to this asceticism, Christianity was adopted as a State religion, in order to uphold and strengthen the power of the ruling classes. Rives La Monte says:

"Under slavery and the Roman rule earthly comfort and happiness became impossible and there sprang up the belief in future bliss. This belief

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 49.
†Philosophical Essays. pp. 122, 123, 169.

has been of the utmost service to the ruling classes, as it has had a narcotic influence on the exploited and oppressed. The slave, the serf, could well bear patiently a few hardships in this transitory life."*

In the words of Charles Kerr:

"In an age of persecution the oppressed Christians comforted each other with dreams of a future state in which patient suffering should be rewarded with all conceivable delights. Borne up by this faith, the slaves and laborers forgot the idea of revolt and applied themselves patiently to toil for their masters, looking for a glorious reward in heaven. Early in the fourth century, the Emperor Constantine and the more sagacious members of the ruling class came to a realizing sense of this, and Christianity became the State religion. Ever since that time the ruling classes in the most civilized nations have zealously professed Christianity and have liberally supported it, while not until lately has it failed to give them good value for their money, by keeping the minds of the working class on the things of another world."†

"The People," New York, February 18, 1900, says:

"How has the ruling class established this control over its members and its slaves? In three ways: through religion, through public opinion, and through the law, with its judges and soldiers."

*Int. Soc. Rev. Dec. 1901. p. 437.

†Morals and Socialism. Chicago 1899. pp. 8, 9.

"Religion is perhaps the most powerful of these means of maintaining class society by inducing the members of the subject class to act contrary to their own interests and in accordance with that of their masters. And Christianity, the religion of the most progressive part of the human family, is the most effective of all. It has operated primarily by the offer of rewards in heaven and the threat of punishment in hell. The lesson has been so well taught that, even where the belief in heaven and hell is gone, the old moral feelings connected with it survive for a long time."*

Very vehemently is Christianity accused of abetting the oppression of the poor by the rich, and of the working men by the capitalists. Bebel says in the "Vorwärts," 1901:

"Christianity is the enemy of liberty and of civilization. It has kept mankind in slavery and oppression."†

Aveling writes in the "To-day," a socialist magazine:

"Whether anything is done or nothing is done, little that is of any real lasting value can be done until men and women fairly face the fact that the terrible condition of our poor is due, as are so many other ills, to the two curses of our country and times. These two curses are Capitalism and Christianity. . . . I know that Christianity and

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 109.
†Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. p. 136.

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Capitalism support and are supported by each other. They are Siamese twins. They live, they die together. A blow at one is a blow at both. Christianity is a pander to Capitalism, bringing to it for prey the fair virgin called Labor, beguiled by the hope of a beautiful hereafter."

"In Christianity we see not only a supporter of the greatest evils, but a system that by its fundamental principles vitiates human thoughts and distracts the attention of mankind from the natural and actual. Against these (Christianity and Capitalism), therefore, we fight. So indissoluble are these two, so absolutely does the happiness of the future race depend on their downfall, that we reecho with a modification the cry of Voltaire, 'Ecrasez l'infâme.' "*

To Lafargue parasitism is the essence of Christianity.

"If Christianity, after having been in the first centuries the religion of the mendicant crowds whom the state and the wealthy supported by daily distributions of food, has become that of the bourgeoisie, the parasitic class *par excellence,* it is because parasitism is the essence of Christianity."†

To quote from Loria:

"This same (Christian) religion which took care to check all acts injurious to the proprietors, gave free scope to the most unbridled usurpation, pro-

*Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. pp. 26, 27.

†Social and Philosophical Studies. p. 18.

vided it was not of such a nature as to compromise the capitalistic system. Hence the opportunity for those infamous offenses committed during the entire Middle Ages under the auspices of religion. Christianity permitted the feudal lord to muzzle the tired serf who ground the corn, that he might not convey a morsel of the flour to his mouth. The religion of the day put no check to the acts of violence, the massacres, and the rapine that so long scourged Western Europe and Asia. It tolerated the warfare waged by Christian capitalists against their Jewish rivals in the medieval Europe (as it does to-day in Russia, where the same conditions are historically reproduced) and lent finally its sanction to the most ferocious orgies of blood."*

The "Comrade" (New York, 1903) writes:

"The ethics of Christianity, like its practises, are characterized by a monstrous disregard of common life. Christianity and tyranny are and for ages have been firmly allied. . . . There is no wrong, however terrible, which has not been justified by Christianity, no movement for human liberty which has not been opposed by it. Its very basis is a lie and a denial of the basic principle of socialism. Its own infidelity to the common life of the world is as the antithesis of socialism."†

G. S. Herron most indignantly denounces Christianity as an enemy of mankind.

*Economic Foundations of Society. pp. 36, 37.
†Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 28.

"Nothing so surely as Christianity stands for all that is worse in capitalism, for all that is weak and mean in human spirit, for all that presents the basest and most puerile modes of gaining power. There is no such force making for destruction of spiritual integrity and courage, and for unmanning and deceiving of the race, as the system of religion which monstrously bears Christ's name and characteristically misrepresents him. Among no class of men is there so beggarly a conception of what it means to tell or be the truth as among the official classes of religion; and among no other class is there so parasitical a servility. This has always been so, and it will continue to be so as long as there is an official religious class. It is in the nature of things that it should be so, for organized religion is always the economic dependent of the ruling class."

"Christianity is a huge and ghastly parasite, consuming billions of treasure out of the labor and the patience of the people, and is supremely interested in keeping the people in economic and spiritual subjection to capitalism. The spiritual deliverance of the race depends on its escape from the parasite. The world must be saved from its salvation."*

W. T. Brown, like Herron an ex-minister of the Gospel, is still more outspoken in his condemnation of Christian morals. To quote his own words:

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism, p. 119, from Wilshire's Magazine, The Advance. Nov. 9, 1901. Worker. Nov. 10, 1901.

"I freely admit that ethical consciousness has frequently appeared in individuals, as was true of the Hebrew prophets, of Jesus, of Buddha, and of other religious leaders. But I can think of no formulated religion which makes room for one single ethical element. The religion of the Hebrews was distinctly unethical, so far as their conceptions of Jehovah were concerned. The religious institution does not credit the Supreme Being with one ethical attribute. He was the Omniscient and Omnipotent—never the Self-forgetting One. Ethical ideals constitute the richest part of the teaching of Jesus, but if we have a correct report of his words, he certainly cherished conceptions of God which were unethical. He seems to imply that God is governed only by his own will, that he can do as he chooses and no one has a right to call into question the right of it. But whatever is true of the teachings of Jesus, I defy any one to put his finger upon an ethical element in the theology of Christendom. It is a scheme based on an unthinkable philosophy which admits of no ethical principles."*

Robert Blatchford speaks in the same strain:

"The heroes of the Bible, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Elias, Eliseus, were revengeful, immoral, unchaste; they were liars, cheaters, robbers, murderers."

"The ethical code of the Old Testament is no

*Int. Soc. Rev. July 1900. p. 11.

longer suitable as the rule of life; it does not teach the sacredness of truth, religious tolerance, humanity, human brotherhood, peace. The moral and intellectual advance of the human race has left it behind."

"I believe that to-day all manner of evil passions are fostered, and all finer emotions of the human spirit are retarded by reading those savage old books of the Jews as the word of God."*

Bax caps the charge of immorality when he writes:

"If on their intellectual side, as theories of the universe, the older religions are a *non possumus* for us, they are this none the less on their moral side. The local and tribal religions of ancient times were encountered by the newly awakened ethical conscience of the individual as such. Much in them which was natural symbolism to his ancestors was repellent to him. But Christianity itself contains the same opposition in a more developed form. It is useless blinking the fact that the Christian doctrine is more revolting to the higher moral sense of to-day than the Saturnalia or the cult of Proserpine could have been to the conscience of the early Christians. And more than this, the social and humanistic tendencies of the age, the consciousness of human welfare and human development as 'our being's' end and aim, as the sole object worthy of human devotion, must instinc-

*God and My Neighbor. pp. 57-72.

tively shrink from its antithesis, the theological spirit, and this despite the emasculated free Christian and theistic guise in which the latter may appear at present. 'Ye can not serve God and humanity,' is the burden of the nobler instincts of our epoch."*

"The moral side of Christianity is centered in the notions of individual holiness and responsibility to a supernatural being. This ethical side of Christianity, largely overlaid by other influences during the Middle Ages, with Protestantism came again prominently to the fore, and has remained so ever since. But with the growing sense among all earnest men that social utility is the end of all human endeavor, an ethic based on the notion of individual likeness to God is in flagrant contradiction, a contradiction which can only be resolved by its formal surrender."†

Such being the socialist conceptions of Christian morality, we ought not to wonder at utterances like the following:

By E. Ferri in the "Avanti":

"The civilization of social democracy will never befoul itself with Christianity."‡

Or by Lafargue:

"It is they (the capitalists) who corrupt them (the savages and barbarians) physically and

*Ethics of Socialism. pp. 46, 47.

†Ibid. p. 49.

‡Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 25.

morally with alcoholism, syphilis, the Bible, obligatory labor, and commerce."*

Or by Bebel:

"The social corruption of the Roman Empire was the dunghill on which Christianity necessarily grew up."†

Is it still possible to believe that socialism is not hostile to Christianity?

## Section IV

### *Socialist Attacks on the Church*

The Church is the organization of Christianity, the society of those who believe in Christ, united by the faith in the revelation which He has made to mankind, by the observance of the moral laws which He has enacted and by obedience to the hierarchical authority which He has instituted. According to Scripture, the Church as a society is, like Christianity, of divine origin. Christ spoke again and again of the perfect union of the faithful. He calls them members of the same family or sheep of the same flock, subject to Himself as the Supreme Pastor, as also St. Paul later on compared them to members of the same body. He constituted the Apostles into a hierarchy, giving them full power to bind and to loose, to teach and

*Social and Philosophical Studies. p. 163.

†Bebel. Glossen. p. 11.

to rule, and put over them St. Peter as their head, by giving him singly the entire power which He had conferred on the whole body of the Apostles, appointing him pastor of all the faithful in His place, and conveying to him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

But this dogmatic doctrine concerning the Church is in the eyes of the socialists but a jumble of errors. There exists, in their opinion, no divine founder, no Incarnate God that came to teach men, no divine revelation in which men should believe, no divine lawgiver to whom men are subject, and no hierarchical authority vested in human beings that could exact obedience.

The Church, therefore, presented as a divine institution, is to them an absurdity, a deceitful fiction.

Like Christianity, she owes her origin and development not to any divine agency, but to the economic conditions existing in the Roman Empire, in the feudal society of the Middle Ages, and in the modern capitalistic state. This is the general socialist view of her, and, indeed, the only one consistent with the materialistic conception of history.

Bebel thus accounts for the origin of the priesthood in general:

"The ruling classes 'seek to turn religion into a means to preserve their domination.' Their purpose appears fully in their maxim 'The people must be held to religion.' This particular business be-

comes an official function in a society that rests upon class rule. A caste is formed that assumes this function and that turns the whole acumen of their minds toward preserving and enlarging such a social structure, seeing that thereby their own power and importance are increased."*

Engels makes only a general statement:

"In proportion as feudalism developed, it (Christianity) grew into a religion corresponding with it, with a hierarchy corresponding to the feudal."†

Bax says that the hierarchy of the Church in the Middle Ages was a legacy of the Roman Empire, being formed on the model of its organization.‡

Toward the end of the Middle Ages and at the opening of the modern era, the Church began to undergo a transformation owing to new economic conditions. The cities and townships rising against the feudal institutions won independence, the trading classes united in guilds came to power, the agricultural serfs acquired a relative freedom. In the sixteenth century the world market was opening up, the middle classes gained influence and became one of the most important factors in civilization. Trade and industry being evermore in the ascendency, feudal society could no longer exist. In consequence also the religious ideas changed.

*Woman. p. 321.
†Feuerbach. p. 121.
‡Religion of Socialism. p. 24.

"The medieval church, the kingdom of heaven on earth, in full sympathy with the temporal hierarchy, in which also every one had his divinely appointed place, was no religion for the new commercialism. . . . A new form of Christianity, therefore, had to be found to suit the needs of the new Europe which was being born; but this adaptation of Christianity took two shapes so widely different from each other that they have usually been opposed as contrasting religions."*

These two new forms, Bax says, were Protestantism and modern Catholicism. In another place he attempts to show how they corresponded with different conditions and classes of modern society.

"The religious aspect of our capitalistic civilization is dogmatic Protestantism. The Reformation which began among the middle classes has continued, generally speaking, to coincide with them. The predominantly commercial states of Christendom are the predominantly Protestant ones, while even in Catholic countries the main strength of the Protestant minority lies in the trading classes. The religious creed of the capitalist bourgeoisie is dogma, *minus* sacerdotalism. The religious creed of the landowning aristocracy is sacerdotalism, with a nominal adhesion to dogma. The watchword of the one is, an infallible Church; the standard of the other, an infallible Bible. The Romish or High-Anglican squire represents incarnate land,

*Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome. p. 95.

on its religious side; the Baptist haberdasher, incarnate capital."*

Similarly has Engels characterized the Protestant Reformation in the Introduction to his "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific."†

From the origin and development of the Church, as set forth by socialist writers, arose an intimate connection between her and the State. The feudal State was hallowed and ruled by the Church; the modern capitalistic State, on the contrary, rules the Church and employs her as its servant and handmaid. Engels says:

"The great international center of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalized Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It surrounded feudal institutions with the halo of divine consecration. It had organized its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully one-third of the soil of the Catholic world."‡

That nowadays the modern capitalistic State has full control over the Church and uses it to achieve its ends is a usual complaint made by socialists in their party programs.

*Religion of Socialism. p. 77.
†Introduction to Socialism, Utopian and Scientific. p. xix.
‡Bax. Religion of Socialism. p. 24.

We may now without difficulty understand the charges which socialists are hurling against the Church. In their eyes an organization of immoral Christianity, a deceitful invention of men, a conspirator with the State in the oppression of the dispossessed classes and the exploitation of labor, she is pronounced guilty of hypocrisy, of malicious deceit, of treachery, cruelty, exploitation, despotism, of supporting vice and immorality, promoting ignorance and precluding mankind from the light of truth and knowledge. Incriminations of this kind are the burden of socialist speeches and writings, and we have to expect that they will always be, because they are the logical outcome of the materialistic conception of history and civilization. Let us confirm our statement by quotations from prominent authors.

Bebel writes in the "Vorwärts," 1901:

"The Church and State have always fraternally united to exploit the people."

Karl Kautsky says that the working class is opposed to the Church, because she constitutes one of the instruments of class rule.*

Harry Quelch, editor of "London Justice," a leader in the socialist movement of Great Britain, writes:

"As an institution, the Church stands for obscurantism and for reaction. There is no iniquity so vile, no crime, however monstrous, that the

*Appeal to Reason. Feb. 21, 1903.

Church has not blessed and sanctified if perpetrated in the interest of the rich and powerful."

"The Church is one of the pillars of capitalism, and the true function of the clergy is to chloroform the workers, to make docile wage slaves of them, patient and contented with their lot in this world while expecting a glorious reward in the next."

"As long as the Church holds the minds of the workers in its grip, there will be little hope of freeing their bodies from capitalist supremacy."*

J. Sketchley in the "Commonweal" (Vol. IV., n. 137) affirms:

"In every age and in every country the Church and the State have been the great centers of despotism. The Church and the State, the throne and the altar, the priest and the soldier, have ever made war on the people. It is the same to-day. In almost every age efforts have been made to reform the Church, to diminish its power, to free it from corruption. Rivers of blood have been shed, and thousands of martyrs have given up their lives for the purification of the Church. But the Church is still the great engine for enslaving the minds of men, for binding mankind in ignorance and superstition."†

American writers are not less strong in their de-

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 133.
†Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. p. 127.

nunciations. The ex-ministers of the Gospel especially are carried away by holy zeal.

G. D. Herron says in the "Advance":

"Christianity to-day stands for what is lowest and basest in life. The church of to-day sounds the lowest note in human life. It is the most degrading of all our institutions, and the most brutalizing in its effects on common life. The church is simply organized Christianity. For socialism to use it, to make terms with it, or to let it make approaches to the socialist movement is for socialism to take Judas to its bosom. There is not an instance, in sixteen centuries, in which the church has not betrayed every movement for human emancipation it has touched. Official religion and militarism are the two great guardians of capitalism, and the subtle methods of the church, in destroying the manhood of the soul and keeping it servile, are infinitely more to be dreaded by the socialist movement than the world's standing armies."*

W. T. Brown writes in the "Social Crusader" and in the "Advance," July 20, 1901:

"If ever in the history of the world any human institution was completely and finally discredited, it is the religious institution, whose putrid and decaying carcass here at the beginning of the twentieth century menaces the life of men. . . . It stands before the world as a foe to research, an enemy to freedom of thinking, a purveyor of base-

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 93.

less superstitions, a morally impotent and ethically monstrous factor in human society."*

In the "Comrade," May, 1903, he affirms:

"The religion of the Church had no scruple whatever against any sort of mastership or any sort of slavery *that was profitable*."†

In the "Daily People," June 5, 1903, the organ of the Socialist Labor Party, we read:

"The working people are rapidly becoming aware of the fact that the Church of to-day is the same as it has always been—a stumbling block and bar to progress and civilization. It makes no difference what its creed may be, whether it be Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, or any other kind of creed; they all stand united as defenders of capitalism."‡

Charles Kerr makes the same statement; speaking of the Protestant Churches in American cities to-day he says:

"Their whole influence (and this is equally true of the Catholic churches) is on the side of whatever will best serve to strengthen the rule of the capitalist class."§

I. Ladoff rages when he comes to speak of the Church:

"Against 'Churchianity' we must be warned for another reason than its hollowness and soullessness;

*Ibid. p. 123.
†Ibid. p. 125.
‡Ibid. p. 126.
§Morals and Socialism. p. 4.

its petrification and false pretense, its fostering of prejudices, superstition, and narrow sectarian exclusiveness; its intolerance and bigotry, its tendency to side with the powerful and strong and preach slavish virtues to the 'humble and lowly' proletarian; its blasphemous attempts to sanctify the crying injustices of the social institutions of their time and country. This reason is the policy of the institutional churches to take hold of irresistible popular movements in order to keep them in check and control them in the interest of the ruling classes."*

The "Worker," January 12, 1907, has an article from W. McFarlane, under the caption "The Inconsistencies of Church and State." It reads in part:

"The corrupt governments of the ancient world were calculated to suppress all useful inquiries relative to the moral improvement of the species. Church and State formed a villainous copartnership to rob mankind of all the moral excellencies of their character and to blind the human understanding, that men should not see the real principles which are connected with the attainment of the most exalted felicity. But the charm appears to be broken, the clouds of mysticism are rapidly dispersing, and the bright rays of truth through the ascendency of socialism are about to illuminate the nations of our planet, the earth."

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 45.

"The ignorance, the deception, and the crime of priests had corrupted and brutalized the human nature; in order the more effectually to accomplish their wicked designs, they pretended to hold a high and social intercourse with celestial powers and to receive immediately from them the mandates by which man was to be directed in his conduct, such mandates being inconsistent and opposed to common reason."

In a note the "Worker" adds the remark:

"Comrade E. V. Debs has sent us the foregoing article by Comrade McFarlane of Milwaukee, with a few words about the writer, a man of ninety years of age. . . . It should indeed be, as Comrade Debs says, an inspiration to the young men and women in the movement to see such a man, so far past the common span of life, still turning his face to the future, marching in the ranks with the enthusiasm of youth and finding compensation for all hardships in the thought that he is one of a mighty army fighting to bring better conditions for mankind."

In conclusion, let us cull some flowers from E. Untermann's writings.

"When the Roman State died the Roman church became its heir. Naturally it inherited all the diseases of the rotten empire. The blight of slave labor was not removed, but sanctioned."

"The church preferred to elevate poverty and laziness above labor, choosing for its ideal type

a man who will not toil nor spin, like the lilies in the field."

"The church extolled slavish obedience to so-called superiors as most pleasing to God and discouraged a manhood which would have proclaimed that no man was good enough to rule another, politically or spiritually, without his consent. At the same time the leading lights of the church practised none of this obedience toward the Roman authorities, but made every effort to control them."

"Political rule was the only basis on which the church, as the heir of the Roman state, could maintain itself. So the church now deceived the proletariat about its true aims, just as the proletariat had once deceived the Roman state. Religion became a cloak for the oppressive aims of the church, just as it had once been a cloak for the revolutionary aims of the proletariat. It is a bad rule that does not work both ways."

"Realize, if you can, the depth of depravity of that ecclesiastical monster, Catholic or Protestant, which stands with eyes uplifted to heaven while its greedy talons are outstretched for your earthly possessions; which assumes the rôle of spiritual and moral adviser, while its own spirit is sordid and its morality that of the degenerate; which claims for itself absolute understanding and infallibility of knowledge about matters beyond the range of human thought, while it is pitifully ignorant of the natural laws of cosmic and social evolution; which

pretends to supernatural wisdom and inspiration in its lurid imaginations, while its power rests on ignorance and most repulsive physical force; and which does all this under cover of the lie that it is following in the steps of the leader of the ancient Christian proletariat, whom it killed, and whose message it is distorting to suit its own grasping ends, while it always stands on the side of the oppressor against the oppressed."

"It is revolting to think that millions of people, steeped in artificially created ignorance and held there by this gigantic ecclesiastic machine, should have been ruled for 1,000 years by the cruel monster, should bare their very hearts' secrets to it, should unconditionally surrender the unsullied and virgin minds of their sons and daughters to its devilish practises, and should slave their own lives away in quest for the mere necessaries of life, in order that that monster and its prominent votaries might live in splendor and ease, contrary to the letter and spirit of their own teachings."

"It is still more revolting to think that the men who now control this machine should be seeking to entrap by the same brazen means the modern revolutionary proletariat, the only element in human society which is really and truly following 'in his steps.' "*

Shall we believe that such intense hatred, as breathed in the above utterances, will content itself

*The World's Revolutions. pp. 81-102.

with idle words and not pass over into deeds, or that the grumbling proletariat, when hearing again and again such curses uttered against the Church, will not be incensed to persecute her just as well as to struggle against capitalism? Or again, if there is an intrinsic opposition between the Church and socialism, is it conceivable that when the latter will have established itself in full power, the former will be allowed to exist and be granted freedom to fulfil her mission? This would be a psychological impossibility.

## Section V

### *Socialism Aims at Suppression of the Church and of Christianity*

First of all, the socialist leaders, in order to gratify their hatred, incite to war and persecution against the Church. Let us hear Bebel, the actual leader of the German social democracy. He writes in the "Vorwärts," 1901:

"We must wage an unrelenting war against the Church, because she foments civil war among the workers. We must take away from her her control over public education, which she uses to corrupt children, who would otherwise become socialists. We must fight her without weakness, for she is the only power which has dogmas, hierarchies, riches, and agents who systematically attack us. We

must attack her because her economies, her politics, her ethics are contrary to our ideal."

"We must attack her because she is the only reactionary force which has any strength and which keeps us in voluntary slavery, and that is the worst of all, as these Christian working men have really lost all idea of trying to become free."

"Human progress demands that war should be waged against all privileges and arbitrary power; the Church, like the State, rules the individual. We must fight against everything that is based on authority and blind belief, and which tries to destroy science and civilization that socialism is endeavoring to maintain. Socialism, that is to say, humanity, will realize the moral laws which the Church has pretended to use for the oppression and the exploitation of the masses."*

H. Quelch writes in the "Social Democrat," March 15, 1903:

"In answer to your letter asking me for my opinion as to the attitude of the Socialist Party toward the Church, I think that the only line to be taken is that of uncompromising hostility."†

The "People," June 5, 1903, emphatically insists on the necessity of fighting the Church.

"It is high time that we dropped our timidity about attacking those priests and ministers who,

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. pp. 137, 138.
†Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. p. 132.

under the guise of religion and wrapped in sacred folds, so underhandedly and falsely misrepresent socialism."*

Still louder is the war cry of the "People's Press," Chicago, January 10, 1903.

"Now that the Holy (?) Church has come out and declared *openly against socialism,* the socialists *must* either come out the same way and declare against and *fight* the *hoary Beast, Mother of harlots—Rome;* or, *Shut up shop.*"

These are no mere threats. The war against Christianity has on the part of socialism become a reality. Wherever the Church is nowadays attacked or persecuted, the socialists, as a rule, side with or are at the head of the persecutors. So they do to-day in France. Concerning their attitude toward the Church in that country, E. Vandervelde writes:

"In France we see most of the socialist forces taking part in the struggle, enthusiastically helping the radical tactics, advocating against the Church the use of violent rigorous laws, and also attacking virulently all religious ideas. And . . . the anti-ministerialist socialist deputies are not the last to urge the Government by vote and by speech when it is violently struggling against the clerical and national forces."

"Can a sincere believer follow the Church and yet be a socialist? . . . We are bound to admit that

*Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. p. 126.

both in philosophy and in politics there must be war between socialism and the Church."*

In the international congress at Amsterdam in 1904, this attitude of the French socialists was enthusiastically approved and encouraged by the assembled delegates.

The socialists are quite sure of their final success in overthrowing Christianity. Not as though they expect to exterminate it merely by attacks and persecution; their hope rests chiefly on the influence of modern science, neo-Kantian and materialistic thought, of which their theory is but a particular phase. This philosophy taught at the universities, expounded in the schools, published broadcast in the press, will, they hope, extinguish religious ideas and Christian faith in the minds of the growing generation, and more effectively than persecution bring about the suppression of the Church.

This hope is well expressed by the "Sozial Demokrat," the organ of the German socialists.

"Christianity is the greatest enemy of socialism. When God is expelled from human brains, what is called the Divine Grace will at the same time be banished; and when the heaven above appears nothing more than an immense falsehood, men will seek to create for themselves a heaven below."†

Also economic changes, it is thought, will contribute much toward the final victory of socialism.

*Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. pp. 133, 135.
†Quoted by Goldstein. Ibid. p. 116.

If Christianity, like religion in general, is an excrescence of capitalistic society, a resultant of economic conditions and of the modes of production, it must of necessity disappear with the downfall of capitalism and the emancipation of the working class.

Thus E. Untermann prophesies:

"It is only the class-conscious proletariat which knows its enemies in church and state, which combats them uncompromisingly, and which will finally overcome them. . . . And when the day of judgment arrives, as it surely will, the church of the ruling classes will fall with the systems which they supported, and the ancient and medieval revolutionaries will beckon to us out of the past and say: 'It is well.' "*

Belfort Bax also attributes the certain overthrow of Christianity to economic causes.

"There is a party who think to overthrow the current theology by disputation and ridicule. They fail to see that the theology they detest is so closely entwined with the current mode of production that the two things must stand or fall together—that not until the establishment of a collectivist régime can the words of Algernon Charles Swinburne be fulfilled:

'Though before thee the throned Cytherean
Be fallen and hidden her head,

*The World's Revolutions. p. 103.

Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean,
Thy dead shall go down to the dead.' "*

The spreading of atheistic science in the higher strata of society together with the economic condition and the education of the working classes, we are told, has already brought Christian religion to the brink of extinction. In Engels' opinion, Christianity had in France entered upon the last lap of the race when the freethinkers took their seats in the national assembly.† Since then the process of dissolution has rapidly advanced. In our days, we hear it said, the extermination of Christianity is nearly accomplished. Its dogmas are rejected by the educated classes, though its phraseology is still in vogue; its fundamental ideas have undergone a fundamental change, to become conformable with modern conception. J. Stitt Wilson, a Protestant minister in Salem, Ore., maintains in the "International Socialist Review," that the terms God, Christ, sin, salvation, heaven, hell, Bible, Gospel, faith, works, prayer, worship, at present convey a meaning altogether different from the orthodox ideas of former times. God is now conceived as the immanent presence in all energy and life; Christ is not a dying mediator paying debts to the offended deity, but the living revelation of the divine possibilities of every man; evil is the pain

*Religion of Socialism. pp. 81, 82.
†Feuerbach. p. 124.

of life unadapted to environment and in violation of the common good; salvation is character; heaven is a state of the free and harmonious, hell the state of man and men, not punished, but suffering in consequence of the violation of the laws of life's health and harmony, here and everywhere. The Bible is no longer the only source of teaching, our own minds being as privileged in the spirit of truth as those of Isaias and Paul; nor is the Gospel any longer a message to sinking dying mutineers or pirates in a foundering ship. It has become the message of ideal life to a race being schooled from ignorance and limitation to divinity and completeness.*

The same view is held by Bax.

"The distinction between God and World has practically ceased to exist for the educated classes. With the Hegelian philosophy and the vast body of contemporary thought which, whether consciously or unconsciously, is the outcome of that philosophy, the distinction survives merely as a conventional phrase."†

Not only the educated but also the working classes are falling away from Christian religion, according to socialist reports; not as though the normal economic conditions were beginning to be established among them, but because the exploitation they suffer extinguishes in them belief in Divine

*Int. Soc. Rev. Jan. 1901. p. 389.

†Religion of Socialism. p. 34.

Providence and trust in Christianity. For, as Marx says, every decaying form of society hatches in its bosom its opposite that will develop from it.

Engels wrote concerning the conditions of the English working class in 1844:

"English socialism affords the most pronounced expression of the prevailing absence of religion among the working men; an expression so pronounced, indeed, that the mass of the working people, being unconsciously and merely practically irreligious, often draw back before it. But here, too, necessity will force the working men to abandon the remnants of a belief which, as they will more clearly perceive, serves to make them weak and resigned to their fate."*

Bax testifies to the progress which religious incredulity has made since, when he writes:

"The working classes see plainly enough that Christianity in all its forms belongs to the world of the past and the present, but not to the world of the future, which signifies their emancipation."†

Lafargue quotes Charles Booth as follows:

"The mass of the people make no profession of faith and take no interest in religions. . . . The great section of the population which passes by the name of the working classes, lying socially between the lower middle class and the 'poor,' remains, as a whole, outside of all the religious bodies. The

*Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844. p. 237.
†Religion of Socialism. p. 99.

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average working man of to-day thinks more of his rights or of his wrongs than of his duties and his failure to perform them. Humility and the consciousness of sin and the attitude of worship, are perhaps not natural to him."

Lafargue adds:

"Indifference in religious matters, the most serious symptom of irreligion, to quote Lamennais, is inborn in the modern working class. While the political movements of the bourgeoisie may have taken on a religious or irreligious form, no inclination can be seen in the proletariat of the great industries in Europe and America toward elaborating a new religion to replace Christianity, nor any desire to reform it. The economic or political organizations of the working class in both hemispheres are uninterested in any doctrinal discussion on religious dogmas and spiritual ideas; this, however, does not prevent their making war on priests of all cults, regarding them as domestics of the capitalist class."*

American socialist writers fully coincide with Lafargue; Franklin Wentworth† and Charles Kerr‡ testify to the irreligiousness of the great mass of the working people. Austin Lewis writes:

"Now it will be generally admitted that the Church has no control over the mass of working

*Social and Philosophical Studies. pp. 10, 11.

†Socialist Spirit. May 1902.

‡Morals and Socialism. p. 4.

men, that they do not attend its services, that they ignore its claims, that they find their ethical sanctions outside of religion, and that the teachings of the clergy, as far as education has caused the members of the working class to retain certain concepts, which, after all, are more social than religious in their nature, are inoperative with the great majority of the toiling population."*

Whilst thus, not without some truth, all classes, the educated as well as the uneducated, are said to turn away from the Church in ever greater masses, the socialists themselves have become ever more decided in their opposition to religion. Their materialistic theory has not only been set forth by more numerous writers and with greater clearness and decision than ever before, but has also been imbibed more deeply and more generally by the rank and file of them and has generated in their hearts more and more embittered feelings of hatred against and hostility to Christianity. We appeal to the testimony of James Leatham, a prominent English socialist:

"At the present moment I can not remember a single instance of a person who is at one and the same time a really earnest and intelligent socialist and an orthodox Christian. Those who do not openly attack the Church and the fabric of Christianity show but scant respect to either one or the

*Int. Soc. Rev. Feb. 1903. p. 465. Feb. 1907. p. 460. March 1907. pp. 546-557.

other in private. . . . And while all of us are thus indifferent to the Church, many of us are frankly hostile to her. Marx, Lasalle, and Engels among earlier socialists, Morris, Bax, Hyndman, Guesde and Bebel among present day socialists, are all more or less avowed atheists, and what is true of the more notable men of the party is almost equally true of the rank and file the world over."*

Under such auspices the socialists take the brightest view of the future. Their courage in the fight against the Church becomes undaunted and their confidence in victory waxes bold. In this strain A. M. Simons, then the editor of the "International Socialist Review," wrote in 1902:

"The waves of socialism are washing against the walls of the Vatican, and it is doubtful whether the next Pope will remain in the classic land of Papal tradition or move to some more comfortable place. Unless it retires to one of the poles of the earth, ecclesiastical hierarchy, like all other despotism, will soon be crowded off the earth."†

In the co-operative commonwealth, were it once to be established, even the remnants of Christianity must of necessity disappear. The rule of the possessing classes, capitalistic production, exploitation of the workers, which alone are ultimately the condition and cause of its existence, will then have ceased to exist. Hence the Christian, like any

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 85.
†Int. Soc. Rev. Aug. 1902. p. 118.

other religion, must die of atrophy. Atheism will in the future society reach its climax. Materialistic monism will be the prevailing scientific system. It will be accepted by all who lay any claim to advanced mental culture, taught in all institutions of learning and education and even in primary schools; it will exercise supreme influence and dominate all departments of human life. Who will then profess belief in Christian dogmas, universally decried as absurd and superstitious? And how could the new society allow the profession of a belief directly contradictory to all the fundamental tenets on which it is built and on which its very existence is dependent? Consequently also the Church will be exterminated. There will be no believers left. And if even after the revolution some were yet to retain the old faith, she could not possibly survive in the new environment. She would have to retire into complete privacy as in the time of Nero and Diocletian. Her ministers would have to work like any other members of the community in the fields or in the factories. Not only would there be no appropriations for her, but she could not even hold or acquire any property, because as an association she takes no part in collective production. She could build no temples or houses of worship, because owning neither ground nor building material, nor hands, nor means for their construction. Nor could she exercise any influence whatever on the education of youth, because this would be alto-

gether entrusted to the atheistic commonwealth. Not even her ministers would she be able to form, for she could not possess any institutions for that purpose, nor have any chairs of Christian theology. There would be no longer any religious literature. Neither liturgical books nor treatises for Christian instruction could be published. Attacked from all sides and surrounded everywhere by hostile elements, the Church could not print or have printed even a pamphlet in her own defense. She would be completely silenced and within a short time be reduced to the condition of a corpse.

# CHAPTER VI

## SOCIALISM AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

### SECTION I

### *Primitive and Later Christianity Said to Agree*

IN THE preceding discussion we have considered Christianity as it stands out in history since the time of Constantine, professed as a religious creed by all civilized nations and organized in a Church with a hierarchy divinely established to unite her members and direct them to a supernatural end beyond this mortal life. It is this form of Christianity that all socialists condemn as superstitious, absurd, and immoral, and it is this Church that they attack with unrelenting hostility.

But why distinguish between Christianity before and after Constantine? Was the Christian religion not an undeniable fact long before it was professed by a Roman emperor? Most certainly it was. Yet there is a diversity of opinion among the socialists concerning its nature and its teachings in the pre-Constantine era. There are those who hold that it was always the same from its origin down to the present time, a merely human invention, subservient to the ruling class, a medley of old super-

stitious ideas and philosophical errors, the very embodiment of egoism and immorality. But there are others who take just the opposite view. To their mind the Christian religion was in its origin pure, holy, and free from superstition, protecting the poor and opposing the rich, instilling into the hearts of men such charity, disinterestedness, and devotedness to the common welfare so as even to introduce community of possessions. In a word, fundamentally its tendencies and its teachings did not differ from socialism. Corruption crept in only when at the time of Constantine it was treacherously converted into a State religion. From that period it assumed the iniquitous features which it had in the Middle Ages and has in a higher degree in our capitalistic era.

The former view was in all likelihood held by the founders of socialism. Engels says explicitly:

"Christianity had already arisen in secret by a mixture of combined oriental religions, Jewish theology, and popularized Greek philosophy, and particularly Stoic philosophy, before it was adopted as the religion of the Roman Empire."*

Bax sets forth a whole theory about the individualistic tendency of primitive Christianity.

"These symptoms of the divorce of the individual from the life of the state, and his concentration on himself, together with those of the rise of a speculative dualism between nature and spirit,

*Feuerbach. p. 120.

alike found their ultimate idealistic expression in the great Semitic creed,—Christianity, the religion of individual salvation and of the other world."*

Bax traces the individualistic tendency of Christianity back to Christ Himself. To quote from his "Religion of Socialism":

"As to the ethical teaching of Christ with its one-sided, introspective, and individualistic character, we venture to assert that no one acquainted with the theory of modern scientific socialism can for a moment call it socialistic. Socialism aims rather at a rehabilitation (in a higher form) of the classical utilitarian morality of public life. It has no sympathy with the morbid, eternally-revolving-in-upon-itself, transcendent morality of the Gospel discourses. This morality, like that of the whole oriental movement of which it is a development, is essentially subjective, its criterion lying in the individual conscience, and its relation to a divinity supposed to reveal himself in it."†

Christ, as Bax thinks, was crucified on account of His individualistic teachings:

"There is one point in the trite parallel between the circumstances of the execution of Socrates and that of Christ which I am not aware has ever been noticed before. Long previous to the preaching of an introspective ethic by Socrates in Europe, the Hebrew prophets had preached an ethic and

*Religion of Socialism. p. 21.
†Ibid. p. 97.

religion having the same tendency. After the exile a compromise was effected between their doctrine and the older national cultus, which took the form of Judaism." . . .

"Like all compromises, this illogical position was eventually assailed. The creed of the prophets culminated in Jesus. The orthodox Jews sought to combine the spiritualistic individualism of the prophets with the old civic ideal of life, of the decay of which this individualism was the sign. Hence in the Palestine of the Christian era there were two streams of tendency, one drawing from the tradition of the prophets, and the other from the older of the priesthood. The founder of Christianity, by taking his stand on inwardness, personal holiness, purity of heart, etc., and by his open contempt for the surviving symbols of the old political cultus, roused the not unnatural resentment of the citizens of Jerusalem, with whom the old sentiment was naturally strongest. . . . The result was, as at Athens, a conspiracy to be rid of the blasphemous radical. Thus alike in the crucifixion of Jesus, as in the death of Socrates, we may see illustrated the conflict between the ancient communist ideal of devotion to the race, and the new individualist ideal of devotion to the soul and to its non-natural source. In the 'know thyself' of Socrates and 'seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness' of Jesus we have an expression of the same movement, mirrored on the one hand in the

logical clearness of the Attic thinker, in the other in the dreamy introspection of the Syrian mystic."*

Accordingly also the person and the endowments of Christ are characterized by Bax as merely human, nay as decidedly inferior in quality. As intimated in former quotations, Jesus is not even the discoverer of the ethic He taught, for this is the concentrated thought of preceding generations; not a clear thinker like Socrates, but a mystic of dreamy introspection; not a distinctly historical personage of classical antiquity, but a semi-mythical Syrian.

To Lafargue Christianity as preached by Christ is plainly anti-socialistic.

"Jesus in his sermon on the mountain explains its character (*i.e.,* Christianity's) in a masterly fashion; it is there that he formulates the 'Our Father,' the prayer which every believer must address to God to ask him for his 'daily bread' instead of asking him for work; and in order that no Christian worthy of the name may be tempted to resort to work for obtaining the necessaries of life, the Christ adds, 'Consider the birds of the air, they sow not, neither do they reap, and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. . . . Take no thought therefore and do not say, to-morrow what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed. . . . Your Heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all those things.' "†

*Ibid. pp. 174, 175.

†Social and Philosophical Studies. pp. 18, 19.

The worst possible view is taken by E. Debs. In the "Worker," April 20, 1907, he calls Christ the "Tramp of Galilee."

## Section II

### *Primitive Christianity Said to be Socialistic in its Tendency*

The majority of socialist writers, however, are of the opinion that there is an essential difference between Christianity as founded by Jesus and Christianity as introduced in the Roman Empire under Constantine and developed in the Middle Ages. Christianity, they maintain, was in its origin proletarian and communistic, and only in a later period became capitalistic through a monstrous perversion of Christ's teachings. In Europe this view is represented among others by Kautsky, Ferri, Loria, Nitti.

In "Anti-clericalism and Socialism," a paper of Kautsky's, translated for the "Appeal to Reason," we read:

"Christianity, in its origin, found expression in two distinct forms of communism. One of them consisted in the union of the faithful, who renounced marriage and the family and retired into a convent, separated from the contact with the outer world. The other, formed in the interests of the masses of the faithful who did not retire from the world, consisted in a common fund, the wealth of

the Church, which was principally destined to serve in the assistance of the sick, needy, etc., and in satisfying the common wants, such as the education of the children. These two forms of religious institutions, formerly clearly communist in nature, were later diverted to uses detrimental to the welfare of the common people."*

Enrico Ferri affirms that the ardent faith of socialism in a higher social justice for all makes strikingly clear its resemblance to the regenerating Christianity of primitive times, very different from that "fatty degeneration" of Christianity, called Catholicism.†

Loria deplores the sophistical interpretation of the Gospels given by the Church:

"Just as the Bible, in spite of its republican spirit, has so often been used in the defense of kings, so now the Gospels, despite their communistic tone, likewise became a powerful instrument for the protection of the richer class, when confided to the hands of mitered sophists, who understood how to transform the greatest book of socialism into the meanest defense of property."

"The inherent antithesis between the primitive and essentially revolutionary nature of Christian morals, and the quietive character derived therefrom through a malicious artifice, necessarily engendered pernicious digressions during the course

*Appeal to Reason. Feb. 21, 1903.

†Socialism and Modern Science. p. 194.

of religious evolution and violent contradictions which often ended in bloody conflict."*

Professor Francesco Nitti, of the University of Naples, in his "Socialismo Cattolico," essayed to establish the socialistic character of early Christianity by a thorough historical inquiry.† We shall later on examine the reason which he advances for his proposition.

In the American socialist literature the opposition between primitive and post-Constantine Christianity is a frequent topic. Untermann's historical account of primitive Christianity is of all the most interesting. According to him Christ was at the head of an international proletarian movement, which had taken on the cloak of a new religion, to hide its revolutionary aims.

"It was plain that they (the revolutionaries) would have to fulfil the expectations of the Jews as to the coming of the new prophet, in order to use their enthusiasm and bravery for the proletarian revolution, and get them away from the reactionary idea of a purely Jewish revolt. And last, but not least, it was inevitable that they should employ the mystic tricks of the ancient prophets and the religious mode of expression, in order to fulfil the work of those prophets and to hoodwink the Roman authorities. That was the only way to prevent their

*Economic Foundations of Society. p. 53.

†Catholic Socialism, New York 1895, is a translation of Prof. Nitti's "Socialismo Cattolico."

organization and real aims from being prematurely discovered by those in power."*

As Untermann further sets forth, no deception was required on the part of Jesus.

"His own religious convictions compelled him to teach the idea of a world-god and a world-religion, and the international proletariat was the only class in the Roman Empire to realize the economic and political aims by which such a world-religion could become a fact."

Still Christ, as Untermann tells us, fully understood the nature of the revolutionary movement which He was to lead, and of the means to be employed for its success.

"His own words, if their substance has been correctly reported, show that he was aware of his proletarian mission. Of course, the first editors of the Scripture-account took care to modify his radical words and offset them by statements which meant the exact opposite. How much of the true history of the origin of the Christian revolution in Palestine has been suppressed will be difficult to ascertain. As for the so-called miracles, which Jesus is said to have performed, they were a legitimate part of the outfit of every prophet, and his familiarity with the secrets of occultism, as well as his family connections, made him a very desirable agitator under prevailing conditions."†

*The World's Revolutions. p. 66.

†Ibid. pp. 66, 67.

The progress of the revolution is related thus:

"A thorough organization existed in all twelve tribes. The proletarian agitation in Palestine began its public career in out-of-the-way places." . . . "It was only as the word passed along that the news of this agitation spread to the cities." . . . "Jesus was the chosen head of the propaganda committee, which consisted of twelve organizers, besides him, one for each Jewish tribe. The remainder of the organization remained under cover, but the chairmen of the locals were known to the initiated, who had to identify themselves by a secret password and sign." . . . "The organization carried on its work much in the same way as the German socialists during the period of the anti-socialist laws, only that the Jewish agitators had the advantage of speaking a language which the Roman authorities did not understand."

The burden of the proletarian teachings was the following:

"The working people are the salt of the earth. If this salt degenerate, whence shall humanity derive its strength? The working people are the light of the world. They should let their light shine before the people, so that the proletarian ideals and aims may be known."

"The victory of the working class is inevitable."

"The lowly shall inherit the earth, and 'not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law till all is fulfilled.'" . . . "Therefore premature violent revo-

lutions, such as some contemplate, are useless. Violent resistance is an evil, until the majority get ready for it."

"It is not men who are responsible, but conditions. Therefore the workers must not hate rulers; for they are acting as their environment dictates, and they do not understand that the working class must do the same."

"The proletariat does not wish to destroy religion, but to give it real life."

"Men can not come into communion with God so long as they are compelled to live contrary to his natural laws. God can not be a god of hate, but must be a god of love, and only by following the natural laws of his world can men fit themselves for that higher life which will make them one with God. Therefore the working class must first rise out of its servitude and then claim the world for its own. This requires great sacrifices and much strength, but only by walking on this narrow path of the proletarian revolution can men go to heaven."

"For the present give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, but do not relax in your agitation."

"This message struck home like a thunderbolt." . . . "Within three years after the opening of the first agitation, Palestine was honeycombed with revolutionary agitations."

"The Jewish priests and upstarts were aghast. They set trap after trap for Jesus, charged him

with blasphemy, breaking the Sabbath and attacking their religion, and at last denounced him to the Roman authorities as a rebel."

"It would have been easy enough for Jesus to refute these charges."

"But he became a victim of his own fatalistic belief in the inevitable course of things. The opportunity for effective propaganda during the Easter festivities in Jerusalem seemed so inviting that he could not resist the temptation, and took a greater risk than was necessary. He practically delivered himself with open eyes into the hands of his enemies. In spite of the unwillingness of the Roman authorities, the partisans of the Jewish priests succeeded in having him crucified."

"However, there is much evidence for the probability that he was not dead when he was taken from the cross, and that his comrades removed his body from the tomb, into which it had been temporarily placed, and nursed him back to life in one of their secret haunts. At least some of his friends claimed to have seen him alive three days after his crucifixion."

"The belief that he had risen from the dead increased the influence of his message and the movement gained rather than lost by his alleged death."

"Fired by his example, the followers of Jesus displayed a disregard of their own lives and safety which spurred every true man among them to the greatest exertions. Persecutions seemed to add

only more fuel to this movement. About thirty years after the death of Jesus it had spread to every province in the Roman Empire and eaten its way into the very heart of Roman society."*

After this ingenious *historical* report of the revolutionary movement led and directed by Jesus, Untermann relates how under Constantine Christianity was turned into a State religion.

A schism had in the course of time arisen among the Christians.

"The predominance of the religious note in their message, which appealed to all classes and left much room for unclearness, weakened the proletarian organization from the moment that members of other classes, attracted by the lofty spirit of the proletarian ideas, joined in large numbers. This led to a gradual transformation of the former working class organization into a religious sect, with representatives of all classes, and to the development of an exclusive priesthood in place of the proletarian agitators. To the extent that this transformation took place and the progress of time dimmed the memories of the original character of the movement, class distinctions carried coldness and disruption into the ranks of the Christians. The communistic practises jarred on the sensitive nerves of the wealthy members and the primitive democracy was gradually confined to the intercourse of the true proletarians among themselves."

* Ibid. pp. 68-75.

"In the beginning of the fourth century the Roman Empire was on the verge of utter collapse. Slave labor had become unprofitable. . . . On the other hand the labor of free men had not yet become respectable. Politically, the empire had been disrupted by dynastic feuds and by continued invasions of barbarian tribes. A concerted action of the international proletariat would have been fatal to the Roman supremacy. Without the support of the leading Christians the empire could not endure."

"Emperor Constantine realized this in the year 312. With great skill he availed himself of the schism between the Christians to win the wealthy and influential priests to his side, and thus to get control of the entire organization. He suddenly saw a great light shaped like a cross. Such visions had played a prominent part in the history of the Jews and early Christians."

"But the new Saul became a Judas. And the Christian Judases who assisted him were rewarded for their treachery, instead of being punished. The entire purpose and meaning of the Christian organization and message were perverted."

"His (Christ's) cross on Golgotha which had for centuries been the symbol of his revolutionary aims, for which he had given his life, now became the symbol of submission and nerveless resignation to the station which it had pleased God to assign to the proletarians."

"The Christian proletariat had revived all those

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elements of primitive Gentilism which make for a higher human development away from the brute." . . . "The ruling-class Christianity instead of eliminating the cause that set man to war against his kind and against his own soul, strengthened the economic inequality and sanctioned the primitive sins of patriarchy."

"Jesus had transformed the Jewish god of hate into a god of love and a prince of peace. The church of the possessing Christians molded him into a hideous monstrosity, a god of love who is a god of hate, and a prince of peace who brings a sword. And they lived up to this monstrosity of their own creation and flew at one another's throats immediately after they had betrayed their proletarian comrades and destroyed the life's work of Jesus."

"But the modern proletarian remembers the cross on Golgotha."*

As Untermann more plainly than others expounds the socialist views regarding the nature and development of early Christianity, we have considered ourselves justified in quoting at such length; however, others propose the same ideas, though not with so much historical skill, yet it would seem, with even greater warmth and eloquence.

G. D. Herron writes with his usual unction:

"With Christianity we have, as socialists, a different problem to face. It is the system of Chris-

*Ibid. pp. 76-80. Int. Soc. Rev. April 1905. pp. 594, 595.

tianity that we have with us, and the spirit of Jesus that is hid and bound; and the spirit of Jesus can not escape until Christianity is destroyed. There could be no greater antithesis, no deeper gulf, than that between Jesus and the Christian system."*

In a lecture delivered in Chicago he said:

"When the early Christian movement was well on its way to undermining the empire with Jesus' idea of life and property, the Roman robber class engrafted itself upon that movement so securely that Rome rules the world to this day, through the laws and class consciousness of those robbers, whose chieftain the Cæsar always was. So completely did the Roman upper class blind and ride the essentially proletarian and class conscious party of Jesus, that official Christianity has performed capitalistic police service ever since, from the day the monstrous criminal Constantine decreed the orthodoxy of the church, down to this Sunday morning's sermon from Chicago pulpits."†

Again in the "International Socialist Review," he says:

"Jesus and socialism affirm the same organizing life principle. And that which Jesus and socialism affirm, the institution of Christianity garbles or denies."‡

*Quoted by Goldstein, Socialism. p. 119.
†Int. Soc. Rev. March 1901. p. 576.
‡Ibid. Jan. 1901. p. 434.

J. Stitt Wilson with moral indignation raises his voice against "Julian," who in an article on Paganism and Christianity written for the "International Socialist Review" (June, 1901), identified the teachings of the Church with those of Christ. He endeavors to down such an identification by the authority of two noted scientists, Enrico Ferri (whose words we quoted above) and Ernest Haeckel, and by the power of his own rhetoric, and concludes:

"Such a position as Julian takes is untrue to history, it is false to the dispassionate scientific method, and being so reckless to the universal truth which Jesus enunciated, it is positively unfair to the race, in which there originally burns the same elemental and original fire of truth and justice which Christ interpreted."*

Charles Kerr maintains as an historical fact that "the whole trend of the New Testament is toward communism."†

The "Appeal to Reason" on February 21, 1903, issued a number for the express purpose of illustrating the socialistic tendency of early Christianity and evincing its corruption in the Constantine period. A. W. Ricker in a lengthy article compiles the proofs from Professor Nitti's work, summing up the result of his learned effort in the following statements:

"We have proved by the foregoing that Jesus

*Ibid. July 1901. p. 5.

†Morals and Socialism. p. 8.

taught a new economic system based on the brotherhood of man and exemplified in communism. Second: That his disciples taught precisely the same doctrine and organized the first Christian church on communal lines. Third: That the fathers of the church taught the same doctrines, and that because of these doctrines Christians were persecuted and martyred. Fourth: That when Constantine espoused Christianity, he took complete charge of the church, changed all its policies, and compelled a new interpretation of the scriptures."

"We have only to add to this the further fact, that from the time of Constantine to the present, the church, both Protestant and Catholic, has thoroughly misrepresented the purposes and doctrines of Jesus and, from a body of believers seeking to establish the brotherhood of man, has become the supporter always of monarchy in Europe, and commercialism and capitalism in this country."

In conclusion let us call attention to a pamphlet written by C. W. Wooldridge, M.D., the object of which is likewise to prove the identity of Christ's Gospel with modern socialism. It bears the scriptural title: "The Kingdom of God is at Hand" and begins with the following words:

" 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.' Why give such a title to a book like this? Because nearly 1,900 years ago Jesus of Nazareth in these words proclaimed to mankind the Co-operative Commonwealth which we seek. That message was the Gos-

pel; is the Gospel yet. That Co-operative Commonwealth is at hand—within reach—to-day; and as the adequate effect must follow the adequate cause, so the establishment of that Co-operative Commonwealth on earth as it is in heaven must and will abolish poverty, ennoble human character, enlarge the field of knowledge and the freedom of mankind and open the infinite universe both on its material and spiritual sides, to man's perception and his understanding."*

## Section III

### *Reasons Alleged for the Socialistic Tendency of Primitive Christianity*

The reader may be astonished at the confidence with which Untermann, Herron, Ricker, and Stitt Wilson assert the socialistic tendency of primitive Christianity and its subsequent utter corruption as undeniable historical facts. His surprise is, indeed, pardonable. If moreover he should like to know by what historical researches these gentlemen have reached their bold conclusions, we could, in a critical age like ours, still less consider him as worthy of reproach. We shall endeavor to find out the principal reasons which are claimed to support their assertions.

First of all, Scripture itself, it is said, represents

*The Kingdom of Heaven Is at Hand. C. W. Wooldridge, M.D., Chicago. Charles Kerr & Co., preface.

Christ as a proletarian agitator, declaring war against the economic system which at His time existed in Palestine.

"Jesus denounced the Pharisees, the reigning Jewish sect, for their hypocrisy, cruelty and meanness. He compared them to whited sepulchers, fair outside, but full of corruption within." . . . "He opposed the entire system of profit, of interest and wages then in vogue. Parable after parable was uttered to show the injustice of those things." . . . "Numerous in the Bible are the anathemas which he hurled against the ruling class of the Jews, the woes and condemnations which he pronounced against the rich, the praises bestowed on those who lead a simple life and are free from the stain of ill-gotten wealth." "He himself was an humble carpenter, a poor working man."

He moreover taught the brotherhood of men and acted accordingly, gathering about Himself a band of disciples, all of whom were poor working men except Matthew, and forming with them a communistic society. If His teachings had been accepted, the entire economic system would have been changed. But they were rejected.

"Because he was an agitator who attacked the existing institutions, the Jewish priesthood and the well-to-do excited the religious prejudice of the population to the point where they were willing to have Jesus crucified. Just so to-day. The capitalistic class has hired that portion of the clergy that

can be bought by gold and favor to excite the religious and superstitious element to the point where they will cry 'Crucify Socialism.' "*

Secondly, after Jesus was slain, the Apostles continued to teach communism and also introduced it among the faithful. Ricker quotes from Scripture (Acts iv. 32-35):

"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul. Neither said any one of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the Apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

The Apostles no less than Christ condemned the rich as parasites and insisted on the necessity of working.

"If any one will not work, neither let him eat." . . . "Go, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth, and the cry of them has entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."†

Thirdly, the Apostles died and the Fathers suc-

*Appeal to Reason. Feb. 21, 1903.
†Ibid.

ceeded them. Both the communistic teaching and the communistic form of social organization continued for three hundred years after the death of Christ. The Christians, generally belonging to the poorer classes, were most cruelly persecuted, because they were attacking the evils of the Roman State and creating discontent. The early Fathers "almost all admit that wealth is the fruit of usurpation, and, considering the rich man as withholding the patrimony of the poor, maintain that riches should only serve to relieve the indigent."

This was the teaching of Clement, Justin, Tertullian, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Basil. Only when after Constantine Christianity became the official religion and was embraced by the rich and by members of the government, the ecclesiastical writers manifested different views on the question of property.*

J. Stitt Wilson thinks the change in ecclesiastical doctrine was brought about by the Greek Fathers. They, in his opinion, transformed, after the fashion of the Greek philosophers, the self-evident and universal truths which Jesus taught into a dogmatic system, with the ethical element eliminated, and "changed the basis of fellowship in Christian societies from character and conduct into assent to metaphysical dogmas."

"The ethics of Jesus passed." . . . "Even the moral teaching of Paul was discounted."

*Ibid.

"The light shed by Grecian civilization . . . took a firm hold of the human mind, including the best minds among the fathers of the church; for Ambrose of Milan, one of the greatest theologians of his time, reduced the Greek ethics to a pseudo-Christian form, and the victory of Greek ethics was complete." . . . "The dead hand that lies on the modern church to-day, which makes trouble when the social teaching of Jesus is read with emphasis in a modern pulpit, is the dead hand of pagan ethics."*

Fourthly, attention is called to the affinity existing between primitive Christian teaching and modern socialist ethics. There are socialist writers to whom socialism is the resuscitated communism of the early Christians, the very Gospel of Christ applied to the conditions of our time.

J. Stitt Wilson maintains that the mission of Christ and Christianity was neglected, but is now carried out by modern socialism. The following is the proof advanced by him:

The mission of Christ was to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. The Churches have no good tidings to bring to the children working in factories and growing up in illiteracy, to millions of women toiling in our industrial

*Int. Soc. Rev. July 1901. pp. 11, 12.

centers, to the poor laboring classes oppressed as the Israelites were in Egypt. But socialism is the program that is actual good news to the poor, that will heal the hearts broken by the woes of poverty in the awful competitive struggle, that makes it impossible to put out the light in the minds of tens of thousands of little ones and makes it possible to open the eyes of the blind and the ignorant, that will set at liberty the captives, the thousands now under the Juggernaut of modern capitalism.*

Dr. Wooldridge argues for the identity of the kingdom of heaven and the future socialist society.

"Does the Christian doubt that Kingdom of Heaven proclaimed by his Lord is the Co-operative Commonwealth?

"Let him consider these points from the Master's teachings":

"1. Self-seeking is forbidden and devotion to the common good is commanded. 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth.' . . . 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'"

"2. The possession as well as the pursuit of private wealth is forbidden and this in such a manner that economic equality only can remain approved. Quotation is unnecessary here; every Christian can think of texts enough to prove the point."

"3. Honor is to be given according to services."

"4. The profit system of commerce is forbidden. The first prohibition of self-seeking would imply

*Appeal to Reason. Feb. 21, 1903.

this, but, specifically, he taught, 'Whatsoever ye receive, give as much again,' and to the profit-mongers in the temple he said that they made of the place where they did business a den of robbers."

"The outline is complete, and by those who were with the Master the meaning of his teaching was understood."*

G. D. Herron sees in socialism the creative power that will bring the city of God down from heaven and build up the kingdom of heaven planned by Jesus.

"Already have socialists wrought better than they knew; they have uncovered spiritual resources long hid by the church; they have made possible a working economic of the kind of life which Jesus defined as the kingdom of heaven; they have laid foundations for that quality of public order which the Apostle called the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God."†

In another passage Herron maintains that class-consciousness and class-struggle were the burden of the ethical teaching of Christ and the Apostles.

"There is no such class-conscious movement in history as that which Christ initiated. First and last and all the time the disciples and friends of his ideas were told to stand together; to be true to one another with a love that would never be beaten and a loyalty that would never fail. By this shall all

*The Kingdom of Heaven Is at Hand. pp. 3, 4.

†Int. Soc. Rev. March 1901. p. 577.

men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love to one another, even as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that you are socialists, if you stand together as workers, true to one another with a comradeship that can not fail or betray, asking not freedom from any masters, but finding freedom in your own unity of interest and faith and devotion. Do you not see that the call of socialism to working men to unite is but the modernized and economized appeal of Jesus to his disciples to love one another? Do you not see that the class-conscious command of the socialist is identical with the class-conscious command and experience of the early communities or brotherhoods of the sweet and brave Christian springtime? You will find how radical is the identity, if you go deep enough into the class-conscious philosophy, and then read the burning and decisive commands and warnings of Jesus and his Apostles in the light of that philosophy."

"But there is a philosophical analogy that goes deeper into the human fact than the mere identity of appeal. Jesus distinctly regarded the wealthy and priestly and governing orders as belonging to a robber class; the horrible fact that these gained their luxury and power through oppressing and exploiting both the labor and the souls was always before him and sometimes loaded his words with terrible denunciations. His intensely class-conscious feeling was profoundly scientific; it was not

a mere sentiment of justice, but a clear-sighted recognition of the fact that one class of people was living off another class; that the small class which did the living and the robbing ruled the large class which did the producing without living. . . . He saw it was impossible to rationalize or spiritualize a world-order that was a huge and hideous parasitism; so his friends and disciples were told to stand together as a class until they should increase unto the power to overcome the world for the kingdom of heaven. His class-conscious attitude and command was precisely that of the modern socialist, however different his outlook and philosophy in other things. The early Christians were bidden never to forget that they were the poor, the disinherited, and despised, that they were the oppressed, the enslaved, and the outcast. . . . Against the rich and the powerful, the capitalized and governing class, the vested interests of the institutions, they were to stand together as one man, and stand as against the destroyers of the world, the despoilers and slayers of souls and bodies. Only by the power and joy of their class-conscious unity could they truly love one another and form a common defense against treason and lovelessness."*

Owen Lovejoy is of the opinion that the economic interpretation of history is the foundation of Christ's doctrine.

"However warmly defenders of 'the faith' may

*Int. Soc. Rev. Feb. 1901. pp. 502, 503.

have claimed everything in sight as the fruit of a revealed system of truth, it is evident that Jesus himself did not ignore, nor relegate to a secondary place, the problem of bread. Indeed, any interpretation of his words which gives them meaning today will show that he proceeds upon the principle which Frederick Engels calls 'The materialistic conception of history,' that production and exchange is the groundwork of every social order; while the thesis of the 'Communist Manifesto' of the early Socialistic fathers reads like a modern adaptation of the life philosophy of the Man of Galilee. It is not maintained that the full significance of this philosophy could be at once understood. The industrial method was essential to the development and application of the truth."*

## Section IV

### *Critique of the Reasons Alleged for the Socialistic Tendency of Primitive Christianity*

We see the authors quoted have taken great pains to identify early Christianity with the socialist movement. Clearly their object in doing so was to justify their pronounced hatred against the Church and contemporary Christianity and at the same time to manifest deep respect for Christ and the pure and untainted form of the religion founded by Him. Will they succeed in achieving

*Int. Soc. Rev. Sept. 1902. p. 170.

this double object in the eyes of the thinking public? This will primarily depend on the conclusion to which a careful examination of the reasons alleged for their views must lead. Having faithfully stated these reasons, even in their own words, we are reasonably expected to express our opinion on their intrinsic value.

Does Christ in reality propose in the Gospel the essential teachings of socialism? As such we must consider the denial of a personal deity and of immortal life, the doctrine of comfort and of earthly goods as man's essential happiness, the precept of class-consciousness and class-struggle, the condemnation of private property at least as far as the productive means are concerned. It is impossible to read the New Testament without gaining the conviction that Christ taught the very contrary of all these socialistic tenets. He constantly speaks of His heavenly Father as personal God and unmistakably asserts that He Himself, the Son of man, is the Son of God equal in divine nature with the Father. The Evangelists relate the miracles He wrought in proof of these assertions and above all report His resurrection from the dead and His ascension as irrefragable arguments for His divine nature and for His heaven-born doctrine. Furthermore, Christ, in the Gospel, teaches the immortality of the soul, eternal life in a future world, eternal reward for virtue and eternal punishment for sin; He proclaims as a divine law the necessity

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of loving all men, also enemies, of obedience to all legitimate authority, even to that of the Jewish priests and scribes, of patience and meekness even in the greatest tribulations, of renouncing the goods and pleasures of this mortal life for the happiness to be enjoyed in a life beyond the grave.

The Apostles laid down the same doctrine in their epistles. Not only do they preach the divinity, the death, resurrection, and divine glory of their Master, and our redemption from sin through His blood, but they also insist in their admonitions on obedience, submission, patience, and self-renunciation.

"Let every soul be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God, and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist purchase to themselves damnation" (Romans xiii. 1, 2).

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your lords according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the simplicity of your heart, as to Christ: not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but, as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians vi. 5, 6).

"If doing well you suffer patiently, this is thankworthy before God; for unto this are you called" (First Epistle of St. Peter ii. 20, 21).

Evidently this admonition only repeats what Christ said in the sermon on the mountain:

"I say to you, not to resist evil; love your ene-

mies, do good to them that hate you, that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew v. 39, 44).

Nor do the Apostles forbid private property, though they counsel voluntary poverty. St. Peter said to Ananias:

"Why has satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost, and by fraud keep part of the price of the land? Whilst it remained did it not remain to thee? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?" (Acts v. 3, 4).

St. Paul did not command that the rich should give up their possessions, but only that they should not trust in their riches and attach their hearts to them, and be merciful and liberal. For he wrote to Timothy:

"Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God (who giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy); to do good, to be rich in good works, to communicate to others" (First Epistle to Timothy vi. 17, 18).

Will the socialists admit as historically reliable, genuine and authentic the biblical texts, which teach the divinity of Christ and redemption of mankind through His death, relate His life and His miracles, speak of the retribution in a future and immortal life to come, and enjoin self-denial, patience, and obedience as ordained by divine law? If they do, primitive Christianity as taught by Jesus and

the Apostles is not socialistic, but diametrically opposed to socialism. If they do not, then the Bible is a compilation of falsehoods and forgeries given out as the word of God.

Socialists, adopting modern higher criticism, have chosen the latter alternative. Untermann writes:

"The first editors of the Scripture-account took care to modify his (Jesus') radical words and offset them by statements which meant the exact opposite. How much of the true history of the origin of the Christian revolution in Palestine has been suppressed will be difficult to ascertain."*

"It is impossible to refer to the scriptural accounts in any other but the most general way. For we must remember that these accounts were written by members of the ruling class three hundred years after the death of Jesus and his contemporaries, and that they had been handed down during those centuries from mouth to mouth. The historian must, therefore, beware of imitating the flights of imagination and rhetoric which the official interpreters of the scriptures pass off on their audiences as impartial presentations of the origin of Christianity."†

In the words of Charles H. Kerr:

"The Bible was written by many different people living hundreds of years apart, and having different ideas on the questions they were writing about."

*The World's Revolutions. p. 67.

†Ibid. p. 69.

"Some parts of the Bible were written by people who saw that it was wrong for some men to make slaves of other men, for the rich to rob the poor. That is what Moses and John the Baptist and Jesus thought. But there are other parts of the Bible that were written by people who had always lived in a state of slavery such as we live in, had always seen people unhappy, and could not imagine how things could ever be different so as to give every one a chance to be happy on this earth. And so these people set their imaginations to build up pictures of another world that the people might go to when they were dead."*

"In the Jewish Bible, the Old Testament, this doctrine (of future life) is wholly absent. In the reported sayings of Jesus there are traces of it here and there, many of them suspected of being late additions to the manuscripts. But in the epistles of Paul it appears unmistakable, and in the later Christian writings the future life grows to be the subject of chief concern."†

R. Blatchford's views on the authenticity of the Bible have been quoted in the preceding chapter.

Accordingly Holy Scripture, also the New Testament, is not of divine origin; it is not even the work of witnesses contemporary to the events narrated, but was written long after the time of Christ and is falsely presented as the word of God and

*The Folly of Being Good. p. 11.
†Morals and Socialism. p. 8.

the work of the Apostles and Evangelists. It was composed by men of different times and different convictions, who embodied in it quite opposite views and doctrines, radical and conservative, proletarian and aristocratic. And after it had come into existence, its text was repeatedly tampered with and corrupted even in the earliest times.

Can a book of this description be credited with any authority? Can it ever be relied on as a trustworthy historical source? But besides the Bible there are no other historical documents from which the socialists could show the origin and character of primitive Christianity, for Christian tradition or the teaching of the Church is of no account for them. The profane authors are silent concerning the life and doctrinal system of Christ, and much less do they ever mention Him as a proletarian agitator of Palestine.

Where in the world, then, are the reasons on which socialist writers rest their assertions and unheard-of conclusions regarding early Christianity? From their point of view and on their supposition nothing can be proved concerning it; neither that it was socialistic nor that it was anti-socialistic, neither that it admitted nor that it denied the lawfulness of private property, for there is no valid evidence of any kind. If the authority of Scripture is denied there is only one conclusion to which socialist writers can consistently adhere, and that is, that the origin of Christianity is historically uncer-

tain, and its original teachings unknown. To dry up all historical sources to which we have access and at the same time term later Christianity a corruption of the religion instituted by Christ, and even maintain with full confidence the identity of Christ's doctrine with socialist philosophy as a certain and undeniable fact, is the climax of inconsistency.

As to the communism that existed among the first Christians, the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles of the New Testament prove that it was a matter of free choice left to the individual believer and by no means an obligation put on all members. Moreover whilst it existed, as far as historical proofs go, only in the churches of Jerusalem and Alexandria, there is not a shred of evidence that even there it was practised for three centuries. Were the socialists to introduce among themselves the communism of the first Christians and live up to their doctrines and their example, they would in no way be opposed, but welcomed by the Church. But for the present at least it is impossible to discover any resemblance between them and the early Christians. For while the first Christians, as we read in the Acts, were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, in the communication of the breaking of the bread and in prayer, modern socialists, atheists and materialists as they are, blaspheme God and utterly despise any divine worship. While the Christians believed in the divinity of Our Lord, in His resurrection, and in the redemp-

tion through His blood, the socialists scorn the very idea of a divine Redeemer. Again the Christians suffered cruel persecutions at the hands of the Jewish magistrates and the Roman emperors for their faith, but, far from rising against lawful authorities or resisting them, they were sincerely obedient in all things temporal. The socialists, on the contrary, incite to resistance against those from whom they suffer, carry on a bitter struggle against the possessing class and wage an unrelenting war against the existing rulers, intending to wrest governmental powers from their hands. Among the Christians there existed perfect harmony and charity, for "the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul" (Acts iv. 32). Among the socialists we daily see continual strife and discord, to such an extent that, as one of their own number said in the "Worker," 1906, "they treat one another with the sledge-hammer." Though they speak much of a universal brotherhood, it is not conceivable how it could ever exist among them. For to be brothers and members of the same family, they must have a common father. But, being materialists and evolutionists, they can not acknowledge one, unless they consider as such the "*Pithecanthropos Erectus* or extinct Ape-man of Malaysia." Consequently there is between the early Christians and modern socialists not only no trace of resemblance, but in every respect direct opposition and utter dissimilarity.

If we study the works of the early Fathers of the Church, we find that concerning private property they perfectly agree with the doctrine of the Apostles; for, like them, they admonished the faithful to be just, generous, and charitable, and even strictly commanded them to communicate to others from their superabundance. But they nowhere condemned private possessions as unlawful in themselves; nay, the very same ecclesiastical writers whom the socialists quote as holding communistic views were staunch defenders of the right of private property, as passages taken from their own works prove. If the question is to be discussed whether the Church or socialism has carried out or is carrying out Christ's mission, we must well distinguish between words and deeds. Socialism, indeed, has a joyful message, consisting of splendid promises of earthly comfort, enjoyments, peace, and happiness, but thus far it has not fulfilled them, having as yet produced scarcely anything else in society than strife and discontent. As to the future, it is, to say the least, doubtful whether it will ever outgrow its fighting period and establish peace and harmony.

The spiritual message of Christ concerning eternal life, though the principal part of His Gospel, is ignored or rather disavowed by socialism. On what ground, then, can it in the face of thinking men boast of carrying out the Redeemer's mission? Or with what right can it accuse the Church of hav-

ing withheld His message or frustrated His intentions?

The Church always cared first for the spiritual welfare of men, though not in the manner in which unbelievers and materialists would like her to do it. She always considered the eternal salvation of souls as her first duty, just as it was the primary object of Christ's mission. But at the same time she has never in the course of nineteen centuries opposed or neglected the temporal welfare and the intellectual elevation of the human race. Proofs for this historical fact are the labors which she underwent to civilize the barbarians, the care which she took and the sacrifices which she made to relieve the misery of the poor and unfortunate, to mitigate and abolish slavery and serfdom, the institutions which she founded for charity, the schools and institutions which she erected for education and learning, the galaxy of those of her members who were prominent in the several branches of human knowledge and benefited society by their scientific works and inventions, or whom the world admires for their civic and private virtues, for their great deeds both in peace and in war. Only an extraordinary degree of hatred and prejudice can blur the mental sight so far as to see in the Church nothing but corruption, degeneracy, ignorance, tyranny, and oppression, notwithstanding the evident testimony of history to the contrary. Forsooth, the claims of socialism to resemblance with

early Christianity are not warranted. Examination proves them to be not only unreasonable, but altogether discreditable to those who dared make them.

## Section V

### *Socialism and Christ*

The real nature of the esteem which socialists pretend to harbor for early Christianity will be understood, when we more closely examine the views entertained by them concerning the person of its Founder. Of course they always speak of Him in terms of high admiration, holding Him up as a teacher of pure morals and as the introducer of a new era of liberty. But do they recognize Him as that divine person, whom all true Christians believe Him to be, or at least as a man of spotless, exalted character and supreme wisdom? This we must decidedly deny. The appellations which they usually apply to Him are: The man Jesus, the man of Galilee, the son of Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth. Do these names not plainly enough imply the denial of His divinity? Should there be any doubt concerning their real meaning, it is easily solved. Ricker, after having bestowed the highest praises on the Founder of Christianity, adds the significant remark:

"The socialists have a higher regard for Jesus than has the church. Gladly do they place Jesus

and the Apostles along with Marx and those who have taught the world that mankind should be a brotherhood."*

Christ, therefore, does not rank higher than Karl Marx in the eyes of socialists. Herron, formerly professor of "Applied Christianity," writes:

"It will be long before Jesus can pay his debt to the world, and that only when his friends cease to make any demands upon the world in his name."

"He will become a world-teacher when he ceases to be an authority, a brother, when he is no more a master, a comrade, when he is no longer a god."†

Untermann says that the disputed question of Christ's divinity was settled in the council of Nice (A.D. 326). This must evidently mean that the belief in Him as the Incarnate Son of God was made an article of faith only at a time when Christianity was utterly corrupted by Constantine's influence. That Untermann recognizes in Christ no higher than a human nature is evident from the following characteristic traits he relates of Him.

"It was into this atmosphere full of revolutionary forebodings that Jesus, the son of Joseph of Nazareth, a direct descendant of David, was born. The boy grew up in the traditions of his people. He was wide-awake and took a special interest in the study of the history of his people. . . .

*Appeal to Reason. Feb. 21, 1903.

†Int. Soc. Rev. July 1901. p. 66.

He learned many of the tricks which the ignorant regarded as the expression of some occult power. And his deeply religious and generous mind became convinced that a true god must be greater than the god of the Jews."

"When he grew older he became acquainted with the secret revolutionary organizations in Palestine. The ideas of the international revolution had been gradually disseminated from friend to friend by Jews who had been in touch with the proletariat in Italy. Jesus, the son of a carpenter, and himself working at this trade, fell readily in with those ideas."

"As for the so-called miracles which Jesus is said to have performed, they were a legitimate part of the outfit of every prophet, and his familiarity with the secrets of occultism, as well as his family connections, made him a very desirable agitator under prevailing circumstances."

"Jesus became a victim of his own fatalistic belief in the inevitable course of things."*

Not only is there nothing divine in these traits, but even the human qualities are not free from fault. Christ, merely taking up the ideas of His time and epoch, is not their author. His power consists in the knowledge of the secrets of occultism, in family connections, in religious enthusiasm, and forged miracles. He believes in God, but He nowhere asserts His own divinity. In His religious

*The World's Revolutions. pp. 62-73.

convictions He is furthermore a fatalist and dies a victim of His fatalism. But fatalism is an absurd error; and the use of secrets of occultism to work so-called miracles, thus to uphold one's own authority as a prophet, savors of dishonesty and deceitfulness.

According to J. Stitt Wilson, it is doubtful "whether Christ could have passed a creditable examination for a license to preach on those paganized creeds," set up after His time by the Greek Fathers,* so limited was His knowledge, so untrained His mind.

As we heard Herron say above, He owes much to the world.

"It will be long before Jesus can pay his debt to the world."

"No one ever did so much for a cause or for humanity but what the cause and humanity did more for him; for the prophet or the leader stands on the shoulders of the men, and still others give him their flesh to eat and their blood to drink."

His ethics, resting on the views and ideas of preceding ages, must be developed to greater perfection by socialist philosophy.

"The socialist revolution is fed by a common quality of life as much greater than the renunciation of Jesus, as he was greater than the teachers before him."†

*Int. Soc. Rev. July 1901. p. 11.
†Ibid. pp. 65, 66.

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"It (the socialist movement) may so grow in faith in the divinity of life and in the knowledge of how to make that faith its working power, that it shall at last speak a greater word than Jesus spoke, the word that shall set the world to building out of human facts the kingdom of heaven which Jesus planned."*

Untermann regards the religion founded by Christ as a form of paganism; for he says concerning it: "So the new paganism tried to drive out the devil by the help of Satan."†

Even the historical existence of Christ is doubted, or considered as irrelevant by these very socialists who honor and revere Him as the founder of an ethical system essentially identical with socialistic teachings.

C. W. Wooldridge, to whom socialism and the kingdom of God brought by Christ are one and the selfsame thing, writes in his famous pamphlet:

"Some doubt the divinity of the Master or even think his existence a myth. To such we would say that these questions are not material. Somehow, from some source, these teachings got into that book, and it is the truth of the teachings, the question whether if put into practice they will necessarily cause the effect promised, and not the authority of the teacher to which attention is re-

*Int. Soc. Rev. March 1901. p. 577.
†Ibid. April 1905. p. 594.

quested. It is truth and righteousness and not authority to which devotion is required; but one may be excused for giving a very extraordinary respect to the mind that anticipated by 2,000 years the accumulated light of future ages."*

The "Appeal to Reason" has in its issue of January 9, 1904, a similar item:

"The birth of Christ is not a certainty. Scientists have failed to find definite data of this event. In fact, even the year of Christ's birth is unknown."

This is a repetition of Bebel's saying that Christ was a myth, like the Egyptian sun-god, and that His existence was misty.†

After all, what is the high esteem in which some socialists say they hold Christ and the religion founded by Him? He is to their mind no more than a proletarian agitator, belonging to an age in history yet little advanced in civilization, and endowed with no higher qualities than were necessary for successful agitation in His time and His country. The religion He founded is nothing but class-consciousness and class-struggle, a particular stage of social evolution to be superseded by a higher stage, an ethical and social doctrine based on the materialistic conception of history and hence materialistic in its very foundation.

Saying this, we are guilty of no misrepresentation. We have rendered the socialists' views in their own

*The Kingdom of God Is at Hand. p. 5.

†Christenthum und Socialismus. p. 7.

words. And moreover it is logically impossible that they could hold other opinions and use different language. For the very writers who regard Christ as a socialist leader and as such pay Him their homage, are outspoken materialists or at least openly profess the tenets of scientific socialism, and in particular espouse the materialistic conception of history. Accordingly, without committing themselves to palpable contradiction, they can not believe in early Christianity as a divine revelation or in Christ as a divine teacher and redeemer; on the contrary, they are compelled to lower Christianity to the level of materialism and to respect its Founder only for the materialistic ethics they suppose Him to hold. The hostility against Christian religion as divinely revealed is not less intense on their part than it is on the part of Bax or Lafargue, who in their hatred of Christianity make no distinction between its early and its later periods. Nay, the hostility of the former is even more dangerous, because it is more treacherous. For they attempt to overthrow Christianity in the name of Christianity, turning away from it the simple and unwary under the pretext of leading them to pure Christian virtues. To these treacherous tactics Leo XIII called attention in his encyclical letter *"Quod Apostolici Muneris"* (December 28, 1878),* in which he says:

*The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII. New York 1903. p. 26.

"Although the socialists, turning to evil use the Gospel itself so as to deceive more readily the unwary, have been wont to twist it to their meaning, still so striking is the disagreement between their criminal teachings and the pure doctrine of Christ, that no greater can exist."

Having outraged to the utmost the religious feelings and convictions of several hundreds of millions of Christians, the socialists have, indeed, no reason to complain of such warnings of the Roman Pontiff against their tactics and their teachings; they must expect that those trodden down by them will raise their voice to defend what is most sacred to them.

## Section VI

### *There is no Christian Socialism*

From the conclusions arrived at in this and the preceding chapter, it is plain that socialism and Christianity are opposed to one another like fire and water, like negation and affirmation, like death and life. Many socialist writers, as, for instance, Bebel, J. Dietzgen, Bax, and Ladoff, have not failed to call attention to this irreconcilable opposition between Christian dogma and socialist atheism, Christian faith in the Triune God and the immortality of the soul, and evolutionary materialism.

Nevertheless, we hear even nowadays of Christian and even Catholic socialism, not merely from those who treacherously undertake to put a socialist construction on primitive Christianity, but also from such as profess the most sincere belief in Christian revelation. How can we explain this fact?

We ought to bear in mind that socialism has two different meanings, the one modern, the other older and now going out of use.

For by socialism, as the Standard Dictionary says, *formerly* any theory or system was understood which had for its object the amelioration of society and especially the elevation of the working class. Taken in this sense socialism may be truly Christian. There is, in fact, no safer basis on which society may be reformed and its enormous evils remedied than the great religious truths and moral principles made known by Christian revelation. But in its modern acceptation socialism is not a general term meaning social reforms of whatever kind, but a special and definite system of social revolution, advocating the abolition of private property in the productive means and the substitution therefor of collective ownership in all industry vested in the entire people. In other words, it is social democracy which is nowadays internationally established. Taken in this acceptation, socialism is essentially anti-Christian and as little reconcilable with Christianity as is atheism or materialism.

True, there have been and are even now socialists and socialist unions that call themselves Christian. But on examining the reasons why they still lay claim to a Christian appellation, we find that they either have no insight into the fundamental tenets of socialism and the dogmas of Christianity, or have tampered with both of them until they found a way to reconcile light with darkness. To the former class we might repeat a warning of J. Dietzgen:

"Socialism and Christianity differ from each other as the day does from night. To be sure, there are points of resemblance between them. But show me the thing to which no analogy could be found. . . . Though Christianity and Socialism may have some points in common, it is none the less true that whoever mistakes Christ for a socialist is surely a dangerous muddlehead."*

The latter class will find a proper criticism of its doings in the following words of Bax:

"Having shown that in so far as it has any defined economic basis at all 'Christian socialism' is anti-socialistic, it might seem hardly necessary to criticize it further; but as a matter of fact the whole scheme is so vague and intangible that it is quite possible some persons may really believe in the accomplishment of vast changes . . . of a really socialistic nature mainly through the instrumentality of a clarified Christianity, a Christianity which

*Philosophical Essays. p. 122.

shall consist apparently of the skins of dead dogmas stuffed with an adulterated socialist ethics, and of formulas which, though to the simple mind they seem plain enough, the brotherhood of the Guild of St. Matthew will show us mean something quite different from what they seem."*

The essential opposition between modern socialism and Christianity is not changed or modified by ignoring or by tampering with the fundamental teachings of the one or the divine dogmas of the other; it stands out as an undeniable fact, which no tinkering and no confusion will ever succeed in obliterating.†

But here the question may be asked by the reader, whether socialism does cease to be anti-Christian if it be separated from its materialistic basis, and proposed merely as an economic and political system having for its object the introduction of collective ownership in the productive

*Religion of Socialism. p. 95.

†Since socialism in its modern acceptation is no longer a general term, but means a definite system of social revolution absolutely irreconcilable with Christianity, it seems no longer proper to term social reforms based on Christian principles "Catholic or Christian Socialism." We consider as quite pertinent the remark which Father Cathrein makes: "We perfectly agree with Cardinal Manning in maintaining that to speak of Christian or Catholic socialism is a proof of vagueness of thought, or at least of expression. It is our urgent desire that this term should retain its accustomed signification. Why breed confusion and obscurity by the ambiguous use of terms in discussions which stand most in need of clearness and of a well-defined terminology?" Socialism. p. 20.

means, the socialization of all production, and the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth democratically organized. Might it not, if thus framed, be in harmony with Christian doctrine and with the benign intentions of the Founder of Christianity, who came to emancipate the oppressed and to ensure freedom for all men?

From a Catholic point of view we must answer decidedly in the negative. As an economic system socialism denies the right of private property and recognizes as lawful only collective ownership in the means of production and distribution, considering the former as the source of all our social evils and regarding the latter as the necessary condition for the peace and happiness of the human race. Leo XIII has expressly condemned this fundamental tenet of socialism as erroneous and contrary to divine truth. He asserts the right of private ownership, also in the means of production, not only as natural to and innate in man but also as necessary for the welfare of mankind, and hence regards its abolition and the substitution for it of public ownership as unjust and detrimental to social peace and order.

The following are quotations from his encyclical "Condition of the Working Classes," 1891:

"To remedy those wrongs (the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few and the impoverishment of the teeming masses of the laborers) the socialists, working on the poor man's envy of the

rich, are striving to do away with private property, and contend that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the State or municipal bodies. They hold that by thus transferring property from private individuals to the community, the present mischievous state of things will be set to right, inasmuch as each citizen will then get his fair share of whatever there is to enjoy. But their contentions are so clearly powerless to end the controversy, that were they carried into effect the working man himself would be among the first to suffer. They are, moreover, emphatically unjust, because they would rob the lawful possessor, bring State action into a sphere not within its competence, and create utter confusion in the community."

"What is of far greater moment, however, is the fact that the remedy they propose is manifestly against justice. For every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own."

"On this very account—that man alone among the animal creation is endowed with reason—it must be within his right to possess things not merely for temporary or momentary use, as other living things do, but to have and to hold them in stable and permanent possession; he must have not only things that perish in the use of them, but those also which, though they have been reduced into use, remain his own for future use."

"This becomes still more clearly evident if man's

nature be considered a little more deeply. For man, fathoming by his faculty of reason matters without number, and linking the future with the present, becoming, furthermore, by taking enlightened forethought, master of his own acts, guides his ways under the eternal law and power of God, whose providence governs all things. Wherefore it is in his power to exercise his choice not only as to matters that regard his present welfare, but also about those which he deems may be for his advantage in time yet to come. Hence man not only can possess the fruits of the earth, but also the very soil, inasmuch as from the produce of the earth he has to lay by provision for the future. Man's needs do not die out, but recur; although satisfied to-day, they demand fresh supplies for to-morrow. Nature accordingly owes to man a storehouse that shall never fail, affording the daily supply for his daily wants. And this he finds solely in the inexhaustible fertility of the earth."

"With reason, then, the common opinion of mankind, little affected by the few dissentients who have contended for the opposite view, has found in the careful study of nature, and in the laws of nature, the foundations of the division of property, and the practice of all ages has consecrated the principle of private ownership, as being pre-eminently in conformity with human nature, and as conducing in the most unmistakable manner to the peace and tranquillity of human existence. The

same principle is confirmed and enforced by the civil laws which, so long as they are just, derive from the law of nature their binding force. The authority of the divine law adds its sanction, forbidding us in severest terms even to covet that which is another's: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything which is his"* (Deut. v. 21).

"The rights here spoken of, belonging to each individual man, are seen in much stronger light when considered in relation to man's social and domestic obligations. . . . No human law can abolish the natural and original right of marriage or in any way limit the chief and principal purpose of marriage, ordained by God's authority from the beginning. *Increase and multiply* (Gen. i. 28). Hence we have the family, the society of a man's house, a society limited indeed in numbers, but no less a true 'society,' anterior to every kind of state or nation, invested with rights and duties of its own, totally independent of the civil community."

"That right of property, therefore, which has been proved to belong naturally to individual persons, must in like wise belong to a man in his capacity as head of a family; nay, such person must possess this right so much the more clearly in proportion as his position multiplies his duties. For it is a most sacred law of nature that a father should provide food and all necessaries for those whom

he has begotten; and, similarly, nature dictates that a man's children, who carry on, so to speak, and continue his own personality, should be by him provided with all that is needful to enable them to keep themselves honorably from want and misery amid the uncertainties of this mortal life. Now in no other way can a father effect this except by the ownership of lucrative property, which he can transmit to his children by inheritance."

"Hence it is clear that the main tenet of socialism, community of goods, must be utterly rejected, since it only injures those whom it would seem meant to benefit, is directly contrary to the natural rights of mankind, and would introduce confusion and disorder into the commonwealth. The first and most fundamental principle, therefore, if one would undertake to alleviate the condition of the masses, would be the inviolability of private property."*

As a political system, socialism rejects the monarchical polity and admits no other than the democratic form of government as just and lawful, for the reason that it considers all power as created by the will of the people. Leo XIII sets forth the contrary view as the true Catholic doctrine. To quote from his encyclical "*Immortale Dei,*" 1885:

"Every civilized community must have a ruling authority, and this authority, no less than society

*The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII. New York 1903. pp. 209-216.

itself, has its source in nature, and has, consequently, God for its author. Hence it follows that all public power must proceed from God. For God alone is the true and supreme Lord of the world. Everything, without exception, must be subject to Him, and must serve Him, so that whosoever holds the right to govern, holds it from one sole and single source, namely God, the Sovereign Ruler of all. *'There is no power but from God'* (Rom. xiii. 1)."

"The right to rule is not necessarily, however, bound up with any special mode of government. It may take this or that form, provided only that it be of a nature to insure the public welfare."*

Finally socialism asserts the equality of all men both in the political and the economical order. But Leo XIII teaches the direct opposite. He affirms in his encyclical "*Apostolici Muneris,*" 1878:

"He who has created and governs all things has in His provident wisdom so disposed them that the lowest attain their end by the middlemost, and the middlemost by the highest. . . . Just as in the Church God has established different grades of orders with diversity of functions, . . . so also has He established in civil society many orders of varying dignity, right, and power. And this to the end that the State, like the Church, should form one body comprising many members, some excelling others in rank and importance, but all alike neces-

*Ibid. p. 109.

sary to one another and solicitous for the common welfare."

"The socialists wrongly assume the right of property to be of mere human invention, repugnant to the natural equality of men. . . . More wisely and profitably the Church recognizes the existence of inequality amongst men, who are by nature unlike in mental endowment and strength of body, and even in amount of fortune; and she enjoins that the right of property and of its disposal, derived from nature, should in the case of every individual remain intact and inviolable."*

In his encyclical on Christian democracy, *"Graves de Communi,"* 1901, he says:

"For *Christian democracy* justice is sacred. . . . It must safeguard the various distinctions and degrees which are indispensable in every well-ordered commonwealth. . . . Hence it is clear that there is nothing in common between *social* and *Christian democracy."*†

Socialism, therefore, is irreconcilable with Christianity whether it be considered from a philosophical, or a religious, or a moral, or an economic, or a political point of view.

*Ibid. pp. 27, 30.
†Ibid. p. 482.

# CHAPTER VII

## HUMANITARIANISM THE RELIGION OF SOCIALISM

### SECTION I

### *Socialism a Religion*

SOCIALISM is not only opposed to Christianity, but as a materialistic theory shatters all religious belief to its very foundation. We should, therefore, expect that were it ever to gain ascendency, religion would be buried never to rise again, and we should expect this all the more, as its extinction in the future commonwealth has been repeatedly predicted by the highest authorities. But here we are sorely puzzled. No sooner have socialists professed their anti-religious views before the whole world than they assure us that socialism is in need of a religion, nay, is a religion itself, and even the sublimest and most perfect religion. Such assurances, impossible as they seem to be, have been given by several writers in the clearest and most positive terms.

Ladoff says:

"Socialism of to-day is sorely in need of a church with a great religious prophet at its head."*

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 45.

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Bax affirms:

"Socialism brings back religion from heaven to earth, which was its original sphere."*

Peter Burrowes terms socialism the religion of humanity.

"Granting 'the cause' of religion to be found once for all in the cause of the world's workers, socialism becomes with all its developments the religion of humanity."†

Still clearer is the statement of Herron:

"Essentially, socialism is a religion, the religion of life and for which the world long waited."‡

"In its essence socialism is a religion; it stands for the harmonious relating of the whole of man; it stands for a vast and collective fulfilling of the law of love. As the socialist movement grows, its religious forces will come forth from the furnace of consuming experience."§

How shall we look on these and other like assertions? Are we to understand that those who made them retract what they maintain elsewhere and are converted from ungodliness to religiousness? Or do they consciously or unconsciously entangle themselves in inextricable contradictions?

No such interpretations are necessary to solve this perplexing riddle. We need only bear in

*Religion of Socialism. p. 52.
†Int. Soc. Rev. March 1905. p. 535.
‡Ibid. Dec. 1900. p. 327.
§Why I Am a Socialist. Chicago 1900. p. 27.

mind that among the socialist writers "religion" has two quite different meanings. Hence, according as it is taken in the one or the other sense, it may at the same time, though not under the same conception, be accepted or rejected by them. It is first and obviously conceived as belief in a God, the Supreme Being, and as worship of the Creator of the universe. Religion in this sense is held by all consistent socialists in utter abomination. But it is taken also as a social and ethical theory; and as such it is deemed necessary for, and even identical with, socialism.

Both Ladoff and Bax apprise us of this twofold conception they have of religion. The former says:

"Religion may be considered as composed of two principal disciplines. One of these disciplines is the ontological and presents some theory of the non ego, the not ourselves, the outward world at large, its origin, existence, and future and the mutual relations between this world at large and men. The other discipline is ethical and moral. It embraces some theory about social institutions and contains rules and regulations of human conduct corresponding to this theory. The first discipline of religion—the ontological or cosmological—is at present supplanted by scientific philosophy."

"The second discipline of religion, its ethical part, is still of great vital importance as a social power, modifying and regulating human interrela-

tions and consociations for better or worse, according to conditions. Science has not yet succeeded so far in supplanting entirely the subjective, intuitional, emotional, and imaginative elements of religion by results of objective reasoning and impartial observation and investigation."

"It is therefore clear that religion may be of great assistance to secular Socialism, by arousing the human passion for righteousness, by appealing to race instincts and noble emotions, by directing the imagination to a grand vista of human bliss and happiness, of heroic deeds, of self-sacrifice and martyrdom, of fame and glory and immortality."*

A Church and religion with this end in view, he adds, were recommended by Huxley, whom he calls the greatest scientist of the past century.

In like manner Bax characterizes the kind of religion which socialism disavows and the kind which it adopts.

"In what sense socialism is not religious will now be clear. It utterly despises the 'other world' with all its stage properties. That is, the present objects of religion. In what sense it is not irreligious will be also, I think, tolerably clear. It brings back religion from heaven to earth, which, as we have sought to show, was its original sphere. It looks beyond the present moment or the present individual life, though not, indeed, to another world, but to another and a higher life in this world. It

*The Passing of Capitalism. pp. 44, 45.

is in the hope and the struggle for this higher social life, ever-widening, ever-intensifying, whose ultimate possibilities are beyond the power of language to express or thought to conceive, that the Socialist finds his ideal, his religion."*

Herron similarly conceives socialism as a religion when he says that "it stands for a vast and collective fulfilling of the law of love."

Joseph Dietzgen maintains that socialism takes the place of the old religion, and, because it performs its office in a higher and pre-eminent sense, is the only true religion. In his sermons on the "Religion of Socialism" we find some explanations, which complete the views set forth by Bax and Ladoff.

"Religion has since time immemorial been so much cared for and hallowed, that even those minds who have given up the belief in a personal God, in a supreme protector of mankind, still adhere to some sort of religion. Let us for the sake of those conservatives use the old word for the new thing. This is not only a concession made to prejudice, in order the more easily to overcome it, but it is also justified by the thing itself."

Dietzgen marks out *salvation* as the first object of religion.

"All religions have this in common, that they strive for the salvation of suffering humanity, and to lead it up to the good, the beautiful, the right-

*The Religion of Socialism. p. 52.

eous, and the divine. Well, social democracy is all the more the true religion as it strives for the very same end, not in a fantastic way, not by praying and fasting, wishing and sighing, but in a manner positive and active, real and true, by the social organization of manual and mental work."

"*Work* is the name of the new redeemer."

"We deal here with the salvation of mankind in the truest sense of the word. If there be anything holy, here we stand before the holy of holiest. . . . It is real, positive salvation of the whole civilized humanity. This salvation was neither invented nor revealed; it has grown out of the accumulated labor of history. It consists in the wealth of today which arose glorious and dazzling in the light of science, out of the darkness of barbarism, out of the oppression, superstition, and misery of the people, out of human flesh and blood, to save humanity. This wealth, in all its palpable reality, is the solid foundation of hope for social democracy."

"In the secrets which we have wrung from Nature; in the magic formulas by which we force her to do our wishes and to yield her bounties without any painful work on our part; in the constantly increasing improvement of the methods of production —in this, I say, consists the wealth which can accomplish what no redeemer ever could."*

*Philosophical Essays. pp. 93-95.

Besides salvation religion has for its object *systematic thought.*

"Religion is *primitive* philosophy. . . . I called religion philosophy, because it claims not only to redeem us, with the help of gods, and by praying and whining, from the earthly miseries, but also to lend a *systematic* frame to our thinking. The universal significance of religion for uncultured tribes is founded on the universal need for a systematic knowledge of the world. Just as we generally have a practical need for the dominion over the things of the world, so do we generally have a theoretical need for a systematic view of life."

"Yet it is not sufficient to dethrone the phantastic and religious system of life; it is necessary to put a new system, a rational one, in its stead. And that only the socialist can accomplish."*

"In place of religion social democracy puts a systematic conception of the universe."

"According to the religious systems God is the final cause."

"International social democracy is proud to know the 'final cause' on which everything rests, and to possess a scientific basis for everything and a 'systematic philosophy.' "

"This philosophy finds its 'final cause' in the real conditions."

"Therefore we are able to mold consciously and with systematic consistency our notions of justice

*Ibid. pp. 137-139.

and liberty after our material needs, that is the needs of the proletariat, of the masses."*

Religion thus conceived does not interfere with the abolition of the worship of a personal God, but fully harmonizes with the most pronounced atheism. Thus the riddle of socialism as a religion seems to be satisfactorily solved.

## Section II

### *Humanity the Supreme Being in Socialist Religion*

This brand-new conception of religion as proposed by socialist writers still presents a difficulty, which peremptorily demands an explanation. Religion, of whatever kind, also as defined and adopted by socialists, implies a supreme being, to which it refers men and in subordination to which they find their happiness, their true life, their highest perfection. But where in all materialistic philosophy is there a being to which man could be subordinated, man who is autonomous and "made god after his own image"? Socialist philosophers have not failed to give us an answer.

E. Untermann writes:

"'*Ni Dieu, ni maître.*' The united human mind, lifted to world control by the proletarian revolution, will become the natural 'god' of the uni-

*Ibid. pp. 148, 151.

verse and make itself master of a self-controlled universe, whose highest product it is."*

Long before Untermann wrote these lines, J. Dietzgen had defined humanity or civilized society as the only true and eternal sanctuary and as the supreme being in which socialists believe.

"The saints and the sanctuaries, the religious and the worldly ones, must disappear in order that the only eternal and true sanctuary, humanity or mankind, may live."†

"Civilized human society is the supreme being in which we *believe,* on its transformation to socialism we build our *hope.* Such a humanity will make *love* a reality, of which the religious enthusiasts have been only dreaming."‡

Fundamentally, the two writers are at one. As they put it, not individual man is the supreme being, for he is still dependent on his social and physical environment, but human society; and not human society in its initial stage, but society fully developed in knowledge and so far advanced in power as to be able to master and control the universe. Accordingly, the supreme being is not the first cause, the creator of the world, but the world's highest product and ultimate evolution. Nor has it as yet real existence. At present it is only an ideal which ought to inspire men with the highest moral

*The World's Revolutions. p. 170.
†Philosophical Essays. p. 105.
‡Ibid. p. 109.

sentiments, a final cause, an end which is to be achieved by their co-operation and which, vice versa, when attained, will bring complete happiness.

Whatever system refers men to humanity as their supreme being and ultimate end is usually called humanitarianism. Socialism, therefore, conceived as a religion, is humanitarian in the strict and proper sense. So it is, in fact, termed by socialist writers, and as such it is represented by them in glowing and enthusiastic descriptions.

Bax writes:

"Socialism has well been described as a new conception of the world presenting itself in industry as co-operative communism, in politics as international republicanism, in religion as atheistic humanitarianism, by which is meant the recognition of social progress as our being's highest end and aim. . . . As the religion of slave industry was paganism, as the religion of serfage was Catholic Christianity, or sacerdotalism, as the religion of capitalism is Protestant Christianity, or biblical dogma, so the religion of collective and co-operative industry is humanism, which is another name for socialism."*

Ladoff is yet clearer:

"Socialism is sorely in need of a moral or religious force. But such a religious force must be and is gradually being developed in a thoroughly rationalistic idealism, full of vigor and faith in the

*Religion of Socialism. p. 81.

inherent nobility and great future of the human race here on our mother earth, in a self-sacrificing passion for social-economic justice in human society; in a tender sympathy with all downtrodden and dispossessed children of labor; in a hatred of all evil and wrong in human interrelations; in an arduous desire for a nobler, higher, and more truly human culture. Such a religion of a divine humanity, moving onward and onward on the high road of physical and spiritual perfection, is the religion of socialism."*

"Socialism is essentially a humanitarian movement—broad as humanity and deep as the mystery of life."†

"Wilshire's Magazine," January, 1903, has an article from the pen of Eugene Del Mar, describing the transformation of divine worship into humanitarian religion as practised by modern socialists.

"As the identity of God and the Universe came to be discerned and the worship of God was translated into a love of God's creatures, a transformation took place in religious conceptions. God and heaven were transported to this earth, and life here assumed a constantly increasing importance. The worship of God was no longer to be satisfied by forms or ceremonies or through gifts of the Church, but it meant a life consecrated to the in-

*The Passing of Capitalism. p. 49.
†Ibid. p. 53.

terests of humanity in general. It came to be recognized that society was a unit, that the individuals composing it were dependent on each other, and that each might benefit others by self-improvement. And the worship of God, after being translated into love of humanity, finally resolved into the development of Self. Not merely the physical or material body, but the Self, of which this is a manifestation, the individualized Soul, which yet remains inseparable from the universal spirit that animates and inspires all life."

"The religion of the twentieth century is the religion of Humanity. It seeks not to enslave but to free; it aims not to promote the powers and privileges of the few, but of the many; it shows that Heaven and Hell are but conditions of mind that are at our present command, and it combines the Here and the Hereafter into the eternal Now."

"Like everything else, the Religion of Humanity has many contrasting aspects, but these may now be classed under two great divisions of Socialism and Individualism, the latter being generally known as the New Thought movement. Socialism looks at the individual from the point of view of the mass, while the New Thought regards the mass from the point of view of the Individual."*

Herron's socialist religion in all its sublimity is nothing else than humanitarianism. First he

*Wilshire's Magazine. Jan. 1903. pp. 30-33.

deifies humanity by attributing to it divine consciousness.

"It (the new religious movement) is so altogether outside of historic religious institutions and has come upon the world so unawares, that it does not even know itself as religious or spiritual, but it is nought else than the coming of the Son of man to a consciousness of being a Son of God."*

Then he places the essence of socialist religion in the harmonious ordering of human life and the establishment of the social order on the basis of love and brotherhood.

"In its essence socialism is a religion with a very pronounced faith. Elementally, it is identical with the faith which Jesus proclaimed—not the church. That is, it believes co-operation, fellowship, brotherhood, mutuality of interest and responsibility, freedom and friendship as social order, to be more practicable and trustworthy in world organization than competition, economic and social enmity, and the struggle of each man for himself. . . . The elemental faith on which Jesus rested is identical with the elemental faith of socialism—one expressing that faith in terms of spiritual principle, and the other expressing it in terms of materialistic philosophy. Each expression comes to this: That a co-operative or harmonious organization of life is more practicable and liberating than a competitive and individualistic organization. Jesus

*Why I Am a Socialist. p. 8.

would call this the law of love. In modern economic terms, it is socialism."*

"Essentially socialism is a religion—the religion of life and brotherhood for which the world has long waited."

"It comes to the common life as the religion of a free and happy earth, the religion of comradeship, and mutual hope and brotherhood. Let socialists be true to the deeper meanings of the class struggle, and they may gather into the service of socialism the great fund of religious purpose and passion which is now heartsick, unattached, and wasted. And this religious passion, quicker than anything else, will waken the working class to the consciousness of its worth and destiny, and of the struggle and solidarity by which the emancipation of life and labor must come."†

## Section III

### *Duties and Functions of Socialist Humanitarianism*

The quotations given from Dietzgen, Bax, Ladoff, Burrowes, and Herron show sufficiently that as a religion socialism is strictly humanitarian. Still they convey but a vague and general notion of this new and final religion. To obtain a clear and comprehensive insight, we must examine the

*Int. Soc. Rev. Jan. 1901. p. 434.
†Ibid. Dec. 1900. p. 327.

duties and functions which humanitarianism as professed by socialists involves or excludes.

First of all we are informed by Bax that it involves no cult, and employs absolutely no rites. Nor has it any dogma. It has only a social creed, and this based, not on revelation, but on science alone.

"The devotion of the socialized community, like the devotion of all true socialists to-day, will be based on science and involves no cultus. In this point the religion of the Socialist differs from that of the Positivist. The Positivist seeks to retain forms, after the beliefs of which they are the expression have lost all meaning for him. The Socialist whose social creed is his only religion requires no travesty of Christian rites in keeping his ideal before him."*

The duties of socialist humanitarianism consist in devotedness to the well-being and progress of humanity, in love, mutuality, and brotherhood. These are also moral duties; for socialist morality consists mainly in subordination of private to public interests. They are, however, not moral under the same aspect under which they are religious. Bax explains the difference when he writes:

"We have above been speaking of religion and morality as distinct from one another. But the religion of Socialism will be but the ordinary ethics carried into a higher atmosphere, and will only differ from them in *degree* of conscious responsibility

*Religion of Socialism. p. 52.

to one's fellows. Socialist Ethics would be the guide of our daily habit of life; socialistic religion would be that higher form of conscience that would impel us to actions on behalf of a future of the race, such as no man could command in his ordinary moods."*

In his "Ethics of Socialism" he illustrates the distinction still more strikingly.

"The objective social morality . . . becomes, when translated into a higher plane, the basis of religion of socialism, which consists in a sense of oneness with the social body, in an identification of self-interest with social interest, the immediate form of which is an identification of self-interest with that of the oppressed class which is struggling toward emancipation. In the supreme aim and endeavor to aid the economic new birth of society, the revolutionist has no time, and cares not, to be continuously looking within either to admire the beauty or to measure the imperfections of his individual character. His highest instincts are directed not within but without; not on himself, but on the social cause he has in view—the cause which means as its final issue the abolition of classes and the brotherhood of man. Most of us are familiar with the well-known story of the National Guard who, asked during the last days of the Commune, when death at the barricade was often a matter of moments, for what he was fighting, replied: 'Pour

*Socialism. Its Growth and Outcome. p. 298.

la solidarité humaine.' It is quite possible that this poor workman understood but little of scientific socialism and of the precise meaning of solidarity for which he fought; yet his instincts and those of his fellows were true—they had the religion of socialism at heart."*

"The highest expression of socialist morality—socialist religion—is the readiness to sacrifice all, including one's life itself, for the cause."†

Religion, therefore, according to socialist teaching, is heroic morality; not merely subordination of private to public welfare, but identification of personal with social well-being; an enthusiastic struggle for the emancipation of the whole human race; a striving after the highest culture and freedom of human society.

So, in fact, Ladoff understands religion. As quoted above, he characterizes it as a self-sacrificing passion for social-economic justice, as a tender sympathy with all downtrodden and dispossessed children of toil, as a hatred of all evil and wrong in human interrelations, as an arduous desire for a nobler, higher, more truly human culture, as moving onward and onward on the high road of physical and spiritual perfection.

G. D. Herron soars still higher when speaking of socialism as a religion. The following are some of his enthusiastic effusions:

*Ethics of Socialism. pp. 18, 19.

†Ibid. p. 21.

"The Socialist can no longer neglect what we might call the ethical or spiritual appeal. Our healthy distrust of mere sentimentalism . . . has led us too far from the flaming altar at the heart of our socialist movement. That altar is the sense of justice in the common life. It is to this sense of justice we must appeal, if we are to evoke the cleansing revolutionary flame that is to purify the world. It is upon the burning and obvious righteousness of our cause that we must depend for its power to conquer. The Socialist movement must have a spirit as well as a body; it must have a soul inside its economics. It must take the place of the old religions in its power to command the exalting faith and devotion of the people. Socialism may translate into life, into world-creating energy, that aspiration and idealism which religions have absorbed and robbed the world of. The instinct of justice, the yearning for a universal well-being, the desire for social perfection, is deep in the life of the common man. It is for the socialist to draw upon this human fund of spiritual instinct and turn it to account."*

"What is to save socialism from a like capitalized fate? Nothing less than a profound spiritualization of its whole attitude toward life—a spiritualization in perfect consonance with its pre-Marxian sources. A mere economic propaganda will never carry the socialist forces to the co-opera-

*Int. Soc. Rev. April 1904. p. 594.

tive commonwealth. Socialism must become a religion, a spiritual as well as an economic ideal, a great and unifying faith, a true and omnipotent revival of the human soul. Not a letter of the economic philosophy or historic interpretation need be sacrificed, in order for socialism to avow itself as the historic approach to an ideal reaching away beyond itself. Nothing but a faith that will awake the idealistic instinct in the average man, and attach to itself the glad and immense response of his whole being, will safeguard the movement for economic freedom from passing under some new yoke fashioned for it by the alert capitalistic spirit."*

A somewhat different view of religion is taken by P. E. Burrowes in two articles written for the "International Socialist Review." He makes no distinction between morality and religion, both being a social relation between the individual and humanity. Of the latter he gives the following definitions:

"Humanity is between the Cosmos and me as the wedding ring," "it is the Collective Center Human," "the seat of the human race," "the central force of man's history, of a divine, that is, of a whole human dynamic."

"Unserved humanity has been waiting for ages to be brought into spiritual intercourse with its wholeness, without which intercourse it is a cripple, and even so Cosmos has been in the birth throes

*Ibid. March 1901. p. 577.

of struggling ages to be brought into spiritual acquaintance with all its persons without which it is a cripple. Each part and all the rest are in labor to take up the mind and impart the will of each to each. This is the burden and satisfaction of all life; this is the true program of science, religion, monism."*

Religion has for its object to bring about this intercourse between the whole and its part, between humanity and man; it is, therefore, an "effort to enclose nature and the larger life of humanity for the use and in behalf of every person," and, vice versa, the humanization of all knowledge and all social forces, the ordering of all individual life to the larger life of humanity.

Religion, so understood, "will for a long time to come consist of resistance and of giving." Of religion as *giving*, Burrowes offers the following explanation:

"When the intellect of man is a vital desire, when it is more than single mind, more than words, more than dead and doomed petals; when speech is the flexible and faithful expression of our feelings and will, the full weight symbol of our whole life story—then blossoms may not change so often. . . . Mind, emotion, and world will (world-will?) shall then be one and one in every man. As each person receives, he gives, and as he is created from the historical and physical sources of experience, he

*Int. Soc. Rev. March 1905. p. 536.

renders the essence of himself into that larger life of himself—humanity—and as he gives on the man side of his existence, he receives from nature."

"Here, then, we have in sight two cables of the double circuit, whereby is led the mutually responsive life of man and nature, nature and man, *via* humanity."*

Though the union of the individual man and humanity is rendered difficult by the apparent irreconcilability of selfishness and altruism, a way of uniting them has been found. The self is to be found outside of self, not in a pack of cards or a bundle of dollars, but in a *cause.*

"If you are to save yourself and stand self-balanced forever with the unit of human life, . . . you must go forth to find yourself as it is, most surely enshrined in some one cause to-day, outside of you."†

The all-inclusive cause is the cause of labor.

"Need I say that we have not far to look for the all-inclusive cause—the cause of labor? Here self may find its roots and here out of this soil the superman shall bear his fruits at last. . . . Join yourself in life-long wedlock to this one only cause and you save your selfishness and all that is worth saving for all other men in the world."‡

"Labor is the ground pillar of truth during the

*Ibid. p. 540.
†Ibid. p. 542.
‡Ibid. p. 543.

transitional period between false and true religion; and upon this cause must be expended all the giving power of man who is to be sanctified and made part of the wholeness of humanity and of his universe."*

"*Resistance* is the whole social program of every man until, as a whole, man learns his program of substitution and acquires the totality of mind, habit, and will required for the whole doing."†

It is, he further explains, the first duty of socialist religion, because it is necessary for the restitution of the right of all men without exception to spiritual life, a restitution which is identical with socialism.

The power and courage to resist flows from the soul of the human race, from its social potency and central force.‡

The things to be resisted and opposed are besides slavery all that promotes personal contests and differentiation, that stimulates false catholicisms and publicisms, all that prevents the minds from being linked together and mutual, prevents organization of labor from stretching as widely as the hide of labor is stretched to be sweated, prevents us from seeing that between capital and labor there is being fought out the drama of sin versus holiness, all that removes our objects of interest and resistance from the present time and place to later on, all that lifts

*Ibid. p. 535.
†Ibid. Dec. 1903. p. 362.
‡Ibid. p. 360.

dogma above deed, alienates the social forces of labor, law, and wealth from community to persons, places us under law rather than in life, substitutes self's views of society for the social view of self.*

Resistance to evil is morality. Asking himself what a good man is, Burrowes answers:

"The man who has social strength, the man who is intelligently resisting, waiting, and preparing to resist the obstruction of democracy; and his goodness may be graded in proportion to the magnitude of the number of other men with whom and in whose common interest he is making such resistance and preparation."†

Resistance is also the sublimest religion.

"Resistance to capitalism and all its attendants affords the most welcome and fruitful field for developing divinity in the lives of men."‡

Resistance is, moreover, a science, "the philosophy of democracy."§ Such resistance, at once science, morality, and religion, is no other than that "uttered in the proletarian revolutionary socialism of to-day in America."

Burrowes, when thus explaining the religion of resistance, seems to endorse G. D. Herron, who some years before wrote in the "International Socialist Review":

*Ibid. p. 361.
†Ibid. p. 363.
‡Ibid. p. 364.
§Ibid. p. 363.

"To preach the socialist revolution is the sacred duty of the hour. To consent to nothing less is the present test of noble faith. Revolution with the socialist must be a religion, a moral splendor, a holy and regenerating task. No other preparation for a true morality, a natural and indigenous religion, is possible."*

As is plain from the foregoing quotations, not a few socialists profess humanitarianism with great enthusiasm. They consider it the only true religion, which, when all other creeds shall disappear, is to take their place and last forever. P. E. Burrowes expresses their common opinion when he says:

"The religion of earthly wings bound for somewhere superhuman is but a farce and a famine of the soul."

"No class religions on earth can survive the states of fraud and force which nourished them apart from democracy. When they are all gone, like phantoms hideous of the night, humanity will remain and humanity will be its own religion."†

Nay, humanitarianism is, in their opinion, the sublimest religion, infusing a purer and more heroic spirit of self-sacrifice than Christianity. Bax tries to show this by the following illustrations:

"The Russian nihilist or the Paris workman in deliberately exposing himself to certain death, believing in no personal immortality, that is, in no

*Ibid. May 1901. p. 738.

†Ibid. March 1905. p. 535.

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sort of continual existence for himself as individual, for the sake of the cause of human brotherhood, embodies the highest expression of the new ethic the world has yet seen. Martyrs to the introspective, individualist religions there have been without number, martyrs who believed that while their pain endured but for a moment, their joy would be everlasting; that their souls would rise to higher realms, the personality to union with the Divinity. All very fine, all very noble, doubtless, but without a gleam of aught but sublimated individualism and rarified self-seeking. How differently the workman who died for his class, and through his class, for humanity!"*

Herron claims the same excellence for socialist humanitarianism.

"In history and in religion there is no such heroism of sacrifice as his (the socialist's); no such strength of soul and elemental spiritual beauty as that which I have seen in the working-class socialist."

"The socialist revolution is fed by a common quality of life as much greater than the renunciation of Jesus as he was greater than the teachers before him."

"Here in the socialist struggle, I find the wondrously yet unspoken gospel of a renunciation that is real, infinitely surpassing the sacrifice of patriots and of Christians."

*Ethics of Socialism. p. 22.

"The early Christian gloried in his sacrifice and martyrdom, but the socialist is unconscious of his; the early Christian died with his eyes on the nearing gates of his heavenly home, but the socialist lives and suffers and dies in the thought of the noble and happy earth to be enjoyed by those who come after his work is done, when he sleeps."*

Socialist religion, it is further claimed, elevates man to the highest physical and moral perfection, awakens in him a divine life, spiritualizes the world, and brings to all mankind universal peace and happiness. Bax† and Ladoff‡ use very poetical language to bring out these glorious features, but they are surpassed by Herron. To quote:

"Socialism is the spiritualization of the world. It comes as the first actual program for the liberation of the human spirit."§

"In its essence socialism is a religion."

"As American socialism goes on its way, it will become a spiritual passion; not a cry for rights, but a call for elemental righteousness. It will make its appeal to the instinct of man for a divine public life, for communal heroism, and will show how the individual life can fulfil itself only by relating itself to the whole life of mankind. It will create a conscience that shall at last become cosmic and

*Int. Soc. Rev. July 1901. p. 65.
†Religion of Socialism. p. 53.
‡Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1904. p. 271.
§Ibid. April 1904. p. 595.

titanic and able to grapple with all the problems the universe can bring forth. In place of the individual hero of the past, it will submit to you the ideal of a heroic common life; the ideal of a common citizenship that shall truly have its consciousness in heavenly things."*

"The socialist movement may so grow in wisdom of the will to love, in the beauty of freedom and the grace of truth, that it shall speak the word that is to begin a new world just as Jesus spoke the word that began the world now ending. It may so grow in faith in the divinity of life and in the knowledge of how to make that faith its working power, that it shall at last speak a greater word than Jesus spoke. . . . It may rescue the blotched and church-rent pattern of that kingdom (planned by Jesus) from its official keepers and spread it before the world as the daily vision of who and what man is, so that he shall grow until the winds and the waves and the stars shall obey his mighty will to love."†

Socialist humanitarianism has already had its springtide and during this its martyrs and saints who will forever be held in admiration.

As such a beautiful season Herron regards the Paris Commune of 1870-71. In an address, delivered at the celebration of its anniversary in Boston, March 21, 1903, he says:

"That brief time when the working class was

*Why I Am a Socialist. pp. 27, 28.
†Int. Soc. Rev. March 1901. p. 577.

triumphant in Paris, when it arose above traitors within the walls and the foreign foe without, when it dismissed or ignored the government and became its own law and order, is a sort of oasis in the long desert of human exploitation and tyranny; a sort of glad and beatific moment, a momentary and prophetic springtime, in the long procession of the changing forms of parasitism and hypocrisy and brute force which we know as law and government."

"In the glad day when truth can stand on its feet and face the world unafraid, naked, and unashamed, and when the poet comes who shall sing the true epic of the time which we to-day celebrate, those few days of the working class administration of Paris will be seen as the forerunner, the John the Baptist of the better days under the co-operative commonwealth."*

Herron does not differ much from Marx, who in an address delivered to the general council of the international working men's association, said:

"Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society."†

Morris Hillquit, in an address delivered at the Socialist Party's celebration of May-day, 1905, counted among the martyrs of the socialist labor movement "the 30,000 men and women who died

*From Revolution to Revolution. New York 1903. p. 5.

†The Civil War in France. Karl Marx. New York. p. 78.

in the streets of Paris in 1871, arms in hands defending the rights of their homes against the bloodthirsty hordes of the Versaillian capitalists."*

The reader may remember how, in a quotation given above, Bax admired the Russian nihilists and the communards of Paris as heroes and martyrs for the reason that they were actuated by the sublimest spirit of self-sacrifice and the most disinterested devotedness to social well-being.

## Section IV

### *Critique of Socialist Humanitarianism*

Though presented in so glorious a light, humanitarianism has not found universal acceptance even among the socialists themselves. Not a few of them hope to see the proletariat with the advent of a better society forever freed from religious belief of whatever kind. Marx and Engels, after they had once done away with the worship of a personal deity and predicted the death of religion as a natural consequence of normal economic conditions, never essayed to build up a new religious system for socialism.

As to the subsequent leaders of socialist thought, while many of them faithfully followed the example of the classical authors, some positively

*The Worker. May 6, 1905. The anniversary of the Paris Commune is a red-letter day in the socialist calendar usually celebrated with memorial speeches.

disapproved of a socialist religion. On Ladoff's "Passing of Capitalism," from which we quoted above, a reviewer passed among others the following strictures:

"The book is full of strange contradictions. On one page he (the author) is more materialistic than the materialists and a little later he is pleading for some sort of religion. . . . After emphatically declaring himself a monist and a materialist, he speaks of the inherent power of a new idea . . . growing and blossoming into beauty in spite of all unfavorable circumstances."*

The repudiation of humanitarianism is, indeed, the only position which Marxists can consistently hold. Cognitive faculties which, as the materialists suppose, are essentially organic can perceive objects only as far as they make an impression on them. Hence the universal, the immaterial, the ideal, such as are being, relationship, order, beauty, necessity, causality, spirituality, eternity, futurity, are absolutely supersensible, because they can not impress themselves on material organs. Nor can the inner sense form concepts and universals by resolving sense-perceptions into diverse elements, according as the things represented by them are similar in one and dissimilar in another respect. For such elements represent only concrete and individual features of their objects, just as the perception itself does of which they are component

*Int. Soc. Rev. Nov. 1901. p. 388.

parts. Hence, too, no ideas of a higher order are formed when the imagination rearranges the elements in a new manner, since the picture thus formed does not represent its object otherwise than as a concrete individual and material thing.

We must reason similarly with regard to organic appetitive faculties. They can not desire what the senses have not perceived. Therefore, it is impossible for them to pursue ideal ends, or love virtue and beauty as such, to long for the welfare of mankind or society, and much more of future society. And what they are able to love and to desire, they love and desire only as pleasurable to themselves, because they perceive no other goodness than that of their own gratification. For this reason they pursue only their own good and not that of others, except so far as they find pleasure in the pursuit. Hence we understand that the sensuous appetite is absolutely incapable of self-sacrifice.

Again, as there must be proportion between cause and effect, matter which, in the materialistic theory, is supposed to be the ultimate principle of all being, can not bring into existence anything more perfect than itself, or develop from itself immaterial faculties and habits, or perform functions which are superior or opposed to the senses, or produce in the universe order, system, and beauty, which, by their nature, require the influence of spiritual intelligence. These are tenets which the materialists themselves hold and assert when they

deny universal or necessary truths, an ideal order of things, supersensuous or non-organic cognition, or when they maintain that there is no soul really distinct from the body and no cause superior to and distinct from the material universe.

Now socialist humanitarianism in many respects embodies views which are absolutely irreconcilable with materialism. It proposes the highest ideals which ought to inspire the human soul with enthusiasm and heroism, destines man for a future ideal end, requires from him love of the sublimest virtues, enjoins on him complete self-sacrifice and renunciation of self-interest, entire devotedness to the welfare, culture, and progress of human society, promises to him perfect freedom and dominion over his material environment and over all nature, and is said to awaken in him the loftiest moral sentiments, nay, to spiritualize all mankind and infuse into it a divine life.

Nevertheless the prophets of socialist humanitarianism profess materialism and adopt the materialistic interpretation of history, according to which the economic conditions, prior to intellectual influence, are the ultimate, principal, and decisive factor in the evolution of civilization, science and arts, religion, and morals. Let the reader recall to mind the clear and unmistakable utterances made to this effect by Herron, Ladoff, and Burrowes. Herron expressly derives from materialistic foundations all the spiritual virtues which are to grow forth from

humanitarian socialism when he says that "from the recrumbled soil of materialism a nobler and honester spirituality is yet to spring."*

What else, then, is socialist humanitarianism but a palpable contradiction? When Ladoff speaks of the noble morals, the lofty materialism of humanitarian aspirations,† of the spiritual, self-sacrificing passion for social justice; when Herron describes the divinity and spiritual beauty of the new life, the heroism of renunciation and self-sacrifice, which will be more wonderful and perfect under triumphant socialism than it was taught by Christ or ever practised by Christians, they may by the sweetness of their words and their poetical flights enchant thoughtless readers or an unthinking audience, but the critic, after a careful analysis, finds in them nothing but high-sounding absurdities, misleading the unwary like an *ignis fatuus*.

It might perhaps be said that Bax and, in general, the neo-Kantians, who are in favor of a godless religion, are in a better plight than the Marxists. For since they own reason to be a faculty above the senses they might seem to be quite consistent in admitting the knowledge of universal and supersensible truths and, consequently, also in positing a superior ethical will, able to pursue ideal and universal ends. But in reality they are not. As was shown in preceding chapters, at bottom neo-

*Int. Soc. Rev. Jan. 1901. p. 433.
†Ibid. Nov. 1904. p. 271.

Kantianism is no less materialistic than Marxism. For according to its teachings, the universe has grown by self-evolution from a primordial self-existent organism, man is directly developed from the brute, reason is no more than an organic faculty, and will as an ethical inclination only a higher development of animal instincts. With such presuppositions neo-Kantian religion is not less absurd and self-contradictory than purely materialistic humanitarianism.

There are other incongruities in which socialist religion is entangled. Not to mention the absurdity that, according to it, mankind, which was corrupted through many centuries and will only in a far distant time be ennobled by modern materialism, must be regarded as the supreme being. This new religion lacks the light of eternal truths, unchangeable principles, and the direction of a higher law. Being based merely on evolutionary materialistic science, changing with time and circumstances, it is unable to generate firm convictions, or to afford fixed rules of conduct or to restrain disorderly propensities. Hence the enthusiasm which it is said to enkindle, because mainly guided by impulse, is but a raging passion in the fight against the present order of society, undirected, unrestrained, bordering on fanaticism.

As such socialist religion was foreshadowed in the Commune of Paris, "the harbinger and the springtime of the future commonwealth."

The conclusion at which, as a result of all our discussions, we arrive is this: That scientific socialism, after doing away with the worship of a personal deity, either leaves no room for any religion whatever or advocates one that is more absurd and far more pernicious than irreligion itself.

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